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The annual reports, statistics, financials and by-laws are contained in this publication.

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ANNUAL REPORTS 2007

EXECUTIVE MINISTER

Having begun my ministry on January 15th this cannot be considered an Annual Report, but rather a Progress Report. Progress is the name of the game here: we are moving forward together and the Kingdom of God is ahead.

After the leadership transition in ABCORI that resulted in my current placement at the Lawrence building in Canonicus, these last 50 days have been spent in stabilizing the ministry on all fronts. I want to offer a word of thanks to Dr. Donald Rasmussen, not only for the last 10 years of his impeccable ministry, but for the many hours he devoted to me personally helping me to get on board. God bless you Don!

Following there is a list of activities that have taken place since I started working with you:

- We have adopted the “Children in Poverty” initiative of ABCUSA and worked diligently to prepare the groundwork to launch it here in Rhode Island
- We are deploying brothers and sisters to be present at different levels of conversation in the social agenda of Rhode Island: domestic abuse, global warming, ecomunicipalities, and energy related legislation.
- We have organized several teams to be trained and deputized to resource our local congregations at the following levels: envisioning, evangelism, pastoral searches, and Natural Church Development.
- We have worked closely with the Personnel Committee to iron out some issues and were successful in achieving 100% retention with new job descriptions. We are currently working together on defining new mental models for the organization. ABCUSA will facilitate a staff development workshop within the next four months.
- The Executive Staff have achieved an excellent level of teamwork. We meet monthly and work on goal setting and team building.
- We are maintaining conversations with the Department of Church Life in order to explore and re-define our work together.
- I have personally attended as many committee meetings, leadership gatherings, worship services and special events as humanly possible in order to get immersed in the ABCORI life without delay.

We have challenges in the near future:

- Clergy conduct issues
- Congregations in need of reconciliation
- Re-creating a spirit of unity in the ABCORI family
- Establishing a mentorship program for clergy
- Increasing our mission giving
- Creating hands-on mission opportunities

I want to share with you my vision for our ministry together. This will need to be fleshed out by our common dialog and experience.

- Planting new churches
- Invigorate evangelism
- Train and resource lay leaders
- Have a strong prophetic presence in the State and the denominational family
- Enhance church renewal
- Engage churches in hands-on mission work
- Glorify God

I want to express my gratitude to the members of the Executive Minister Task Force who worked on my selection for this post, and the members of the Board of Mission who voted for my election.

I want to say thanks to the tireless work of ordained and lay leaders who have been there to answer every one of my repetitive questions.

I also want to offer a word of appreciation to Colleen Tolhurst for all her support and efforts to make my ministry a little easier.

In the love of Christ,

Liliana Da Valle

DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION

Overview of the Position - The Director of Administration completed her first year term December 31, 2006. This position was new to ABCORI, (replacing that of Director of Camping & Conferencing); it was agreed that the position description would be reviewed twice within the first 18 months to ensure that what was originally defined in the position description reflected a true picture of the day to day responsibilities the Director would oversee. More importantly the Board wanted to retain the flexibility to revise the position as necessary according to the needs of the organization. Additionally this timetable would allow for portions of the position description to be redefined once the new Executive Minister was selected and had 3 – 6 months to settle in to the position.

The first review of the Director and the position took place last August; the second is scheduled for late spring 2007. The Director has found this review to be very supportive to her and, in turn, has facilitated informed decisions in reviewing and carrying out the administrative functions of ABCORI.

Because of the newness of the position to the organization, it has been challenging for ABCORI constituents to easily understand and articulate the role of the Director. Simply put, the Director is responsible for the effective and efficient administrative functioning of all ABCORI related ministries: budgets & related endowments, human resources, personnel, volunteers, camping and conferencing, communications, marketing, development, and other activities as directed by the Executive Minister and/or the Board of Mission.

To assist ABCORI delegates and constituents in better understanding the role of Director, the following report represents a few key areas in which much time was invested in the past year. Many of the decisions referred to in the report were made with support and input from executive members of the Board of Mission and both the Departments of Stewardship & Administration and Church Life.

PERSONNEL – Goals: effectively support our staff, meet legal guidelines, and improve organizational efficiency.

Staff Manual – A complete review of the Non-Exempt Staff Manual took place over a period of many months. Although progress was made updating the manual (and continues to be), this was not a simple task. Advice was sought from an employment attorney in order to help us define our function & responsibilities under the law as a 1) not-for-profit, 2) religious and 3) seasonal (camp) operation. Revisions were made with input from the Personnel Committee and then the document was presented to the Board of Mission. The 2007 Staff Manual was adopted unanimously and became effective in January.

Job Position Descriptions – All job position descriptions were reviewed and revised; others were quite old and rewritten in entirety. Each employee (year round: part-time or full-time) was given a Letter of Employment that included their revised/new position description and a newly created benefit/compensation overview. Employees signed and returned these documents prior to the effective date of March 1, 2007.

Employee Files – All files are now completely updated. They contain required forms such as Proof of Employment, signed Conditions of Employment, Time Off records, etc.

Medical Benefits – A review of medical benefits (primary care & dental) was undertaken as a result of significant premium increases with our former provider in 2006. Benefit options and related statistics were gathered and presented to Personnel and a change in providers was approved as presented by the Director to S & A

Technology – An assessment was made of all computer workstations and software needed to offer better tech support for staff while increasing productivity and efficiency; upgrades were prioritized and purchases made as funds allowed. Licensing of software, such as anti-virus, is underway thanks to the support and cooperative efforts of staff.

Staff Changes – Our staff members, both paid and volunteer positions, are very dedicated and passionate about their ministries within ABCORI. The following brief report is intended only to highlight staffing changes.

Last spring we welcomed a new bookkeeper, Rebecca DeLuise, hired by the Director to fill the vacated position when Ede Karrer moved out of state. Rebecca has proven herself to be a valued and highly respected member of our team. Rebecca has most recently taken on the new responsibility of camp Registrar.

Later last summer Annalize Gilfillan, Camp Program Coordinator, announced her decision to move back to South Africa. A review of the position was undertaken by the Director and a determination made to hire an Assistant Camp Director in lieu of Program Coordinator. This person would work with the Director of Administration to jointly plan and coordinate camp programs. The Assistant Camp Director would also assist the Director by overseeing the myriad tasks involved with preparing for camp and ensuring the smooth functioning of camp. The position was offered to Matt Black, and we are happy to report that he accepted the offer early last fall. Matt has been dividing his time between maintenance and camp responsibilities. From June 1 – August 31, Matt will work in his new position full time. Matt will continue to organize and oversee the successful Beaver & Squirrel Days.

Al Martin was hired to fill the vacancy created in the maintenance department upon Matt's promotion. Al brings to this position a wealth of maintenance experience (and his own tools!). Al will be supporting Tom Browning and the maintenance department by increasing his hours in proportion to the time Matt Black will work on camp tasks.

To better support the administrative offices, and in preparation for the arrival of our new Executive Minister, Colleen Tolhurst was promoted from Secretary to Administrative Assistant, and was given a designated office space. Colleen will no longer serve in a support position for camp. These responsibilities have been reassigned.

Tina Perry, our Hospitality Assistant, has expanded her role and is now working every Tuesday as receptionist at the ABCORI front desk. She is able to offer support for the Director and oversees our InterACTion publication.

CONFERENCE – New rates and a new rate structure for 2007 were created and implemented with important feedback from Linda Martin, Conference Coordinator. The new rates represent a 5 – 7% increase on average. This is the first increase in 4 years. The new rate structure is based upon a 2 tier format, replacing the outdated and cumbersome 5 tier format. The new structure offers the lowest rates (meals & lodging) for all AB churches and another, slightly higher rate, for non-profit organizations. Because food costs are fixed, it was determined that the former meal package 'discount' would be discontinued. All invoicing is now done through our bookkeeper using QuickBooks.

Due to improved 'internal' marketing, follow through with initial inquiries and increased interest in our facilities, revenue for 2006 was significantly higher than anticipated, showing approximately a 12-14% gain. It should be duly noted that revenue from conference and retreat fees support the ministry of summer camp.

CAMP – It would be impossible to include all the wonderful experiences that were enjoyed by the campers and staff last summer; suffice it to say that God blessed us with another successful and safe camp season nurturing and mentoring young people in their Christian faith. Both our overnight and day camp programs were well organized and staffed by talented, experienced international and local counselors. A new follow through survey was mailed to all campers and their families at the close of summer; we experienced a high rate of return with good feedback. This information is under review and changes are being implemented for the new camp season – our 60th Anniversary!

Our first Winter Camp was planned for February 2007. It was designed to model the successful Grandparents' Camp intergenerational summer program and was a collaborative effort with our Director of

Eldercare Ministries, Kathy Black, and camp administration. Interest proved to be lower than anticipated for this year, but the program will be revisited for next winter, allowing more 'lead time' for its promotion. Individual youth did express interest in a Winter Camp planned specifically for them. This possibility for this type of winter camp will be reviewed.

The Director of Administration and the Assistant Camp Director will attend the 85th Annual ACA Conference in Manchester, NH, at the end of March.

New for 2007: Of primary significance is the decision to more intentionally involve AB pastors in the creation of our Bible curriculum. The pastors will then present and teach this curriculum to the 2007 summer staff during staff training week. We are also offering 2 weeks during summer camp when AB churches are invited to bring their youth.

CANONICUS PROPERTY & FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

Last year at the Annual Business Meeting we launched the **John Deere project** to raise funds for a new 2005 Z-Trak lawnmower. We exceeded our goal and received more than the anticipated 50% of cost; almost \$6,000 was donated by ABCORI churches and individuals.

Capital Improvements were completed on 7 buildings with endowment funds and donations restricted for these purposes approximating \$65,000. The Lawrence main office building, Motter Resource Center, as well as Green & Rathbun retreat houses, each had all exterior siding professionally cleaned and resealed with 3 coats of stain. The existing roofs were stripped and replaced on Motter and the Director's Lodge (both more than 20 years old) and a small portion of the Meadowwood shingling was repaired where a small leak had been causing ongoing problems. The exterior siding of the Director's Lodge was replaced. The 2006 **Adopt-a-Building** program received \$10,000 in specific donations for the remodeling and expansion of our A-frame camp store. This project is now underway and will be completed prior to the new camp season. The camp store will be dedicated in early June with its new name: The Hansen Trading Post. We hope to have other buildings adopted in 2007.

Quest School – As the designated liaison between Quest and the Department of S & A, the Director met numerous times with Quest's Head of School to review proposals to further expand their use of our facilities. The Dept. of S & A then offered a counter proposal which was not accepted by Quest. Quest has the option to extend their lease with ABCORI through June of 2011. They are actively pursuing ways to either purchase or rent additional space at another site.

With Joy!

Liz Lussier, Director of Administration

DIRECTOR OF ELDER CARE MINISTRIES

As Elder Care Ministries begins its eighth year as a program of the American Baptist Churches of RI, the landscape of nursing care in our state is shifting into a new, more holistic model of resident-centered care. This new model of care reflects an increase in compassion and understanding for elders as individuals who are respected, admired and treated as valuable members of society. Nursing home residents are being given back the personal power and authority to make day-to-day decisions in their lives. The new model also integrates the idea that we as humans are more than just physical beings – we have a spiritual nature that needs attention and care as well. In light of this, Elder Care Ministries has continued to increase its focus on chaplaincy and spiritual services to nursing home residents as we take the lead in demonstrating this new model of long-term elder care in Rhode Island.

During 2006, two new nursing facilities joined the ABCORI Chaplaincy Program: St. Elizabeth Manor in Bristol and St. Elizabeth Home in East Greenwich. Funding for part-time chaplaincy was, and continues to be, provided to these institutions as was initial guidance in hiring the new chaplains. Rev. Donald Crosby is the chaplain at St. Elizabeth Home and Rev. David Proctor at the Manor. The addition of these two homes brings the total of nursing facilities involved with Elder Care Ministries over the course of 5 ½ years to nine. Another facility, the Scandinavian Home of Cranston, has expressed interest in joining the program when funds become available later this year. Professional support for the chaplains in our program is available at a monthly group meeting hosted by different nursing homes and facilitated by Rev. David Shire, former chaplain at Butler Hospital. Nursing home, hospital and hospice chaplains outside of our Elder Care program also participate in and benefit from this group.

The ministry at our own denominational home, the John Clarke Nursing and Retirement Center in Middletown, also reflects the new model of resident-centered care, though it has seen a number of fluctuations over the course of the past twelve months. Beginning in January of 2006, a new chaplain began her ministry with John Clarke's residents and staff. Rev. Christana Wille McKnight was hired at the Center to fill the position left by outgoing chaplain Wendy Jones who headed home to the mid-west to give birth to her first child. The residents took to Christana immediately, and she to them, creating new programs such as Morning Prayer and a lively ethics discussion group. She continued building trusting relationships through pastoral care, activities and weekly worship until mid-October when she was required to go on disability due to complications in her own pregnancy. An interim chaplain, Lee Andrews, is now in place until Rev. McKnight returns in early summer. Trained in a variety of therapeutic modalities, Lee brings a wealth of creativity and spiritual sensitivity to the home's residents and programs. His willingness to step in on a temporary basis has been greatly appreciated by the residents and the staff at John Clarke.

Preliminary discussion has begun between the ABCORI Board of Mission and the John Clarke Nursing & Retirement Center Board of Directors regarding John Clarke's outreach to expand supportive senior housing outside of Middletown. Canonicus is one of four sites around the state being considered for this proposal. I look forward to learning more about John Clarke's plans for this innovative elder housing project in RI.

Grandparents Camp was held for the seventh season in 2006 with twenty-five participants ranging from 5 to 82 years of age. The campers enjoyed many of the traditional Grandparents Camp activities such as swimming, boating, arts and crafts, games, archery, riding the waterslide, a trip to the beach, nature appreciation and campfire songs. For the first time, we added the adventure of a stream hike with all participants making their way in sometimes waist-deep water through the "wilderness" of Canonicus. By week's end this was voted one of our favorite activities and will be repeated next year. A trip to the Big Apple Circus in Charlestown will also be included in the 2007 program as well as the addition of a second week of Grandparents Camp to the summer schedule.

Denominationally, I have been representing ABCORI in the RI State Council of Churches' search for a new Executive Minister by chairing the Search Committee. The group is an excellent one with representation from various faith communities around Rhode Island. We began our process in September, and have attracted over 60 inquiries for the position. The process is now in full swing as we have completed preliminary telephone interviews and meet to determine finalists for the position. I am also pleased to say that we are on track to meet our goal of recommending a candidate to the Council's Governing Board by mid-April.

Part of the Elder Care Ministries program includes the recruitment and celebration of ABCORI volunteers. Obviously, volunteers are the lifeblood of our various ministries and the many individuals who give of their time and talent at Canonicus are precious to us. Last May, we celebrated with over 80 of these folks at our annual Volunteer Banquet, held in the Shaub Lodge. Director of Administration, Liz Lussier had the pleasure of honoring long-time volunteer Marguerite Thomas with the Kochhan Award for outstanding service. Many thanks to everyone for their generous assistance on the property, at the front desk, with mailings, program, and during the camp season. We could never – nor would we want to -- accomplish all that we do without you.

As we enter this new phase in the life of our organization, I have taken the time to reflect back as well as try to envision the future for Elder Care Ministries. I am grateful for the guidance I received from our recently retired executive minister, Don Rasmussen, especially at the start-up of the program. As Don's time of service drew to a close this past year, I realized that he and I were the only two staff members remaining from the original group at the old Hope Street office. Much has changed over the eight years that I have been in this position. But I do not fear change. It is with anticipation and excitement that I look ahead to all that God has for us with the arrival of our new executive Liliana DaValle. Her enthusiasm and energy is contagious and we have already begun to develop a comfortable relationship in shared ministry. With her guidance, the support of our staff team, and the participation of our churches, I look forward to all that we can do together and am prepared to make 2007 the best year yet for Elder Care Ministries!

Kathy Black
Director of Elder Care Ministries

PRESIDENT

Once again, the ABCORI year, which began with the Annual Gathering at Greenville Baptist Church in May 2006, has been a very busy one. A most significant transition was the retirement of our executive minister, the Rev. Dr. Donald Rasmussen, who had served us for ten years. On October 22 we gathered at Phillips Memorial Baptist Church in Cranston to celebrate his years of ministry with us. During his time as executive minister, he brought the region into a much healthier financial position, instituted and carried out an active Natural Church Development program, actively supported New Life 2010 among our churches, coordinated the merging of the Canonicus and ABCORI staffs into the new Lawrence office building in Exeter, and engaged in Rhode Island ecumenical efforts. Dr. Rasmussen retired on December 31, 2006.

On November 28, 2006, the Board of Mission voted to engage the Rev. Dr. Liliana Da Valle as our new executive minister. She has a diverse background in ministry, most recently serving as an area minister for The American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts with specific work in evangelism and new church planting. Dr. Da Valle began her work with us on January 15, 2007.

I want to thank the members of the Executive Minister Search Task Force who put in many, many hours of work to seek a new executive minister. Paul Becker was chairman, serving with the Rev. Clay Berry, the Rev. Dr. Daniel Cottrell, the Rev. Dr. William Crawford, Sandra Kelly, Ann McGloshen, Donna Sherman, and Don Wolfe. The Rev. Dr. Jeff Woods, ABCUSA Associate General Secretary for Regions, and I served as ex officio members. My thanks also go to the Rev. Marlene Gil and the Rev. Dr. Anthony Pappas, invited representatives from The American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts, who worked with the Search Task Force. Thank you to all individuals and churches that prayed specifically for the work of this committee.

Another significant action taken at the May 2006 meeting was that we voted to increase collaboration between ABCORI and The American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts. Staffs are meeting together as the Bi-Regional Staff Team. A stewardship conference is being jointly planned for September 29. The Massachusetts Historical Society and the Rhode Island Baptist Heritage Center are planning a conference for November 3-4. We look forward to other creative ways in which we may collaborate to enhance the ministries of each region.

Last spring we welcomed Rebecca DeLuise as our new Bookkeeper. She will also be handling camp registration. Colleen Tolhurst has moved from Receptionist and Registrar to Administrative Assistant. Matt Black is now Assistant Camp Director, as well as carrying responsibilities in maintenance. Liz Lussier has completed 16 months with us as Director of Administration. She has helped us make changes to create a more efficient and

supportive staff environment, initiated many capital improvements on the Canonicus property, increased our conference use and income, and brought new ideas for programming and fund-raising. We have been blessed with many accomplishments by all our staff and volunteers this past year.

I am encouraged that many of our congregations and pastors are engaging in the intentional efforts of New Life 2010, seeking to carry out caring ministries, increase spiritual vitality and transform their churches into healthier members of the Body of Christ. We now have sixteen ABCORI churches designated as New Life churches. We rejoice in the new churches developing in ABCORI. Hopefully we will receive two new churches into our fellowship at our May Annual Gathering.

Individuals and churches in ABCORI have conducted mission work tours both within the United States and outside the country. Pastors and churches are endeavoring to understand the local church's role in our contemporary culture and how to reach out to bring the message of love and salvation to many more. I am encouraged by the faithfulness of our people to discover God's leading as we struggle with so many issues both inside and outside the church facing us today. May we be humble enough to seek God in all we do, and may we be bold enough to act on God's direction!

I thank God for all the officers, the Board of Mission, departments, committees, other leaders and staff who are faithful in carrying out their responsibilities for our common ministry. May God give us vision and bless us as we continue to seek ways to carry out mission and ministry together, all to God's glory!

Nancy L. Bancroft, President

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MINISTER SEARCH TASK FORCE

In accordance with our Constitution and By-laws, our President, Nancy Bancroft, appointed a Search Task Force to seek an Executive Minister as the Rev. Dr. Don Rasmussen announced his retirement effective at the end of 2006. Don had given us approximately 10 years of efficient and dedicated leadership. The Search Task Force consisted of:

Paul Becker	Sandra Kelly	Nancy Bancroft, President *
Rev. Clay Berry	Ann McGloshen	Rev. Marlene Gil, TABCOM Rep. *
Rev. Dr. Dan Cottrell	Donna Sherman	Rev. Dr. Tony Pappas, " " *
Rev. Dr. Bill Crawford	Don Wolfe	Rev. Dr. Jeff Woods, ABC/USA Rep. *

** Serving ex officio, without vote. The representatives from TABCOM served by invitation.*

We thank the individuals and churches who supported the Task Force with consistent and continuing prayers. And we thank those who advised us on the characteristics you felt were most important in filling the position. We developed a Profile of the Region, carefully reviewed the Position Description, and made the vacancy known locally and by letters to Executive Ministers of the other ABC/USA regions.

We received information from, or about, over 50 potential candidates, 10 of whom asked not to be considered. The candidates were from all over the US, men and women, with varied ethnic backgrounds. We sent our Regional Profile and questions, to which we requested written answers, to 23 individuals. After reviewing the responses, we checked references for nine people and then interviewed four "finalists".

Our unanimous choice was Rev. Dr. Liliana Da Valle, who brings to the position a unique combination of relevant experience, spiritual breadth and depth, and a vision of our future as a Region. Subsequently, the Board of Mission ratified our offer to her, and many of you shared in the joyous celebration at her installation (at Calvary Baptist Church, on May 6, 2007), which completed the work of the Task Force.

It has been a genuine pleasure and privilege to serve on your behalf in seeking and finding the person God would have lead us at this time. We are excited by Liliana's leadership and we join you in looking forward to many years of growth for our local churches, our region, and our denomination, as well as individually.

Paul Becker, Chairman, for the
Executive Committee Search Task Force

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The Personnel Committee operates in compliance with the By-laws of the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island: Article IX, Section A. The ABCORI President with the approval of the Board of Mission appoints the five members of the committee and designates the chairperson.

The By-laws specify three responsibilities for the committee as follows:

- 1) develop and publish policies and provide for the periodic evaluation of exempt and non-exempt staff,
- 2) serve as a forum for grievances or concerns which exempt or non-exempt staff feel are not being addressed by the organization,
- 3) develop recommendations regarding salaries, wages, and benefits for staff.

The Personnel Committee met almost monthly since the last annual report. Much of time has been spent dealing with the duties of the Director of Administration position and working out the relationship between it and the position description of the executive minister. We feel that the transition has gone smoothly.

We also have tried to understand how we function under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). We sought legal opinion on this and we have a better view but this is an on going discussion. It is complicated because of our being a religious organization, a seasonal employer, as well as an all year employer.

We approved a revision the Non Exempt Staff Manual.

We reviewed the necessity of certain staff living on campus and the implications of this.

We reviewed the Mission Support position and made suggestions as to how this position might be utilized differently.

We have been reviewing our staff needs and encouraging the establishment of more structure as to what is expected of our staff. This has created some bumps in the road as we were journeying down it but we feel that it will reap benefits in the future.

At the present time the Personnel Committee is made up of the following individuals: Whitney Bancroft, Janet Breckenridge, Carlos Mooney, Dick Pierce, Al Vernava, and myself. Ex Officio members of the committee are Nancy Bancroft, Liliana Da Valle, and Liz Lussier Carlos Mooney was a member of the committee but resigned when he moved to Massachusetts. In conclusion, I would like to thank all involved on this committee for their superb contributions to the work of the committee. I would like, however, to single out Liz Lussier for special recognition for her dedication and willingness to accept the challenges to make ABCORI a great, efficient, and productive place to work.

Rev. Henry Pedersen, Chair

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ORDAINED MINISTRY

The Standing Committee on Ordained Ministry has the responsibility for establishing and maintaining ministerial standards, ministerial discipline, pre-ordination licensing, continuing education and providing information about counseling services. The committee meets monthly to review progress on those persons preparing for ordination and to address other business as appropriate.

SCOM facilitates an In Care program for those persons in preparation for the ministry. Person currently in care are: Toni DiPina, Shelia Dubose, Steven Guilmain, Debra Hanson, Blake Horridge, Monah A. Kyne, Rebecca Law, Nate Manderson, Virginia O'Shan, Irving Scoby, Sr., Al Schmid, Michelle Sullivan and Geneva Urquhart.

In Care persons granted pre-ordination licenses (or renewals):

Monah A. Kyne – September 9, 2006
Irving Scoby, Sr. – September 9, 2006
Nate Manderson – September 9, 2006
Al Schmid – December 7, 2006

Ordinations:

Barry Arruda – October 29, 2006

Persons requesting to withdraw from In Care:

Ronald Short – June 1, 2006

Persons seeking recognition of existing ordination:

Rev. Lou Tripler – November 2, 2006

Persons interviewed and recommended for placement on the interim and pulpit supply list:

None

The committee continues to serve as a resource to our churches and persons seeking information and counseling regarding ordination issues. These discussions are often preliminary and may or may not result in a person pursuing ordination.

Rev. Dr. Donald C. Anderson, Chair

RECRUITMENT COMMITTEE

The Recruitment Committee is charged with nominating Officers of ABCORI and members of the Board of Mission and the Departments of Church Life and of Stewardship & Administration, "...giving consideration to adequate representation for all areas of the Corporation." The Committee this year comprised Paul Becker, Rev. Ethel Corbin, Rev. Dr. Dan Cottrell, Rev. Chuck Haines, Peggy Johnson, Sue Maiocchi.

We thank those who have agreed to serve the next term; they are motivated, well-qualified, and we consider that they fulfill our charge. We appreciate particularly the advice and assistance of our Executive Ministers, Don Rasmussen in 2006, and Liliana Da Valle since she started in January. (As chair, I thank Peggy Johnson for heading the committee while work on the Executive Minister Search Task Force precluded my doing so.)

Each year, 16 positions need to be filled, plus any vacancies. Whether clergy or a lay member of "the priesthood of all believers", please consider that God may be giving you an opportunity to meet more sisters and brothers in Christ, to contribute to decisions affecting local churches and the region, to bring new ideas back to your own church, and to grow and have fun contributing to the growth of God's kingdom in Rhode Island. Pray about it, and contact the Recruitment Committee (Nancy Bancroft, Chair in 2007-08) with any questions or suggestions.

Paul Becker, Chairman,
for the Recruitment Committee

DEPARTMENT OF STEWARDSHIP & ADMINISTRATION

The Department of Stewardship and Administration (S&A) is accountable to the Board of Mission – and is responsible for administering the stewardship financial and business affairs of the corporation. These include overseeing administrative policies and procedures governing the general operations of the organization, formulating an annual budget, overseeing all investments, promoting the American Baptist Mission among member churches, promoting fund-raising initiatives within ABCORI, administering designated funds, and being custodian of properties of the Corporation.

The Department operates through four committees: Investment, Property, Stewardship & Mission Support, and the Baptist Fund of RI. Each committee submits a report, which immediately follows this report. Annually, a budget committee is appointed to formulate a fiscal budget for the ensuing year.

2006 was a difficult year for the Department. We continued to work on our goals to increase revenue, develop a fuller understanding of our endowment responsibilities, and to use the newly installed financial system effectively. We were able to successfully transition to a new investment manager and to find ways to fund required maintenance for Canonius.

Revenues declined by a small amount, principally in United Mission Giving but expenses rose sharply beyond our projections especially in the areas of utilities and property and liability insurance. The consequence of these events was a operating deficit of \$56,000 or 6.6% of the 2006 adopted budget.

Finance

Control over ABCORI finances continued to improve in 2006. The 2004 audit was satisfactorily completed after the financial systems were converted and the work for the 2005 audit is nearing completion. We expect to receive the report this month. The 2006 Audit will commence in May and we will be on schedule. The department created and staffed ABCORI's first Audit committee and has begun to develop duties and responsibilities for the committee. To preserve separation of duties, the reporting of the committee is expected to transfer to the Board of Missions in 2007. The transition to the new financial software has been completed and the new features are beginning to provide more useful information and control. In June of 2006 we were successful in hiring Rebecca DeLuise as our bookkeeper.

Quest Montessori

S&A department spent a considerable amount of time this past year dealing with our tenant, Quest Montessori. They have hired a new school director who is charged with expanding the school. We reviewed the contract and expressed our concerns over items of utility costs and maintenance. The School was interested in acquiring more space to expand, proposing to rent more space or purchase land at Canonicus. They also discussed expanding the conference center jointly with us for a more permanent arrangement. The Department affirmed that they were not interested in any Montessori expansion on camp grounds and would be happiest if the school would relocate. They have been cordial tenants but we feel their mission and that of the camp are not mutually supportive. We have decided we will not oppose the existing contract but will not entertain any expansion of space or time. The school director then proposed to erect two modular classrooms for the duration of the contract (3 school years) at its expense. The department responded with a proposal for increases in rent and for the school to use and maintain a separate access to the school. This proposal was refused by the School and its plans for expansion at Canonicus abandoned.

Intentional Giving Campaign

The S&A department worked with Paul Alexander of the American Baptist Fund to develop an intentional giving campaign and each member of the department met with him to discuss planned giving. Paul reported that he had 100% participation and that most members had an existing plan. We are hoping to offer this to the Board of Missions and the member churches in the coming year.

Endowment

The Department is very pleased with the performance of the Pooled Fund under the direction of the new fund manager, Alliance Bernstein. As of January 2007 Annualized Return after fees for 2006 have been 11.9% for Fund B and 11.6% for Fund A. There have been some problems with reporting from our Pool Custodian, Investors Bank and Trust which we are in the process of correcting and expect to have fixed by June 2007. The team of Paul Becker, Barbara Staples, and Don Rasmussen did a great deal more work on history and use of endowments. As a result, we are much more confident that these gifts are being proper used and accounted for. This is great work by Paul, Barbara Staples, and Don, who deserve our thanks for their efforts.

Properties

Properties committee was busy this year with a list of improvements and maintenance projects. They renovated the Directors Lodge, winterized Shaub Dining Hall and completed a number of other projects to maintain the camp buildings and grounds. A successful campaign allowed the purchase of a new lawn mower for the camp. Properties is also currently working on renovation and expansion of the camp store. This has been made possible by a generous gift by the Hansen Family and the store will be renamed "The Hansen Trading Post" to acknowledge their generosity.

In closing the Department continues to strengthen the financial stability of ABCORI. We have taken positive steps to utilize the endowment funds entrusted to us and we have enhanced the maintenance and care of our property. We have established a good foundation for managing both the operating and endowment funds of the Organization and continue to build on that foundation to provide superior service to our member churches.

Looking ahead, ABCORI must work harder to provide added value to its member churches and earn the support of Baptists throughout the state. This will encourage the members to support ABCORI financially and thus, allow ABCORI to carry on its mission to the member churches of Rhode Island.

Respectfully,
Don Wolfe Chair.

PROPERTIES COMMITTEE

This committee serves under the Department of Stewardship and Administration and has as its mission to work cooperatively with ABCORI administration to ensure long range quality care of the properties of ABCORI. At the same time we deal with those issues that are sometimes considered immediate concerns to prevent long term problems.

The leadership of Liz Lussier, Director of Administration, who serves as a member of the committee, has made it possible to accomplish a great deal through coordination and delegation of work with maintenance staff, establishing priorities for work and directing the work of contractors. The dedicated work of the members of this committee is appreciated: Ed Shuman (Pawtuxet Baptist), Walter Lawrence, (Phenix Baptist) Charlie Ward (First Baptist East Greenwich) and Bruce Wilcox (Hope Valley Baptist). Lucian Martin (Phenix Baptist) recently was appointed to the committee and is responsible for maintenance of ABCORI vehicles. We also appreciate the leadership of Rev. Lou Tripler as committee chair for part of the year.

Work days were held several times during the year. Ed's Raiders ~ volunteers led by Ed Shuman ~ have worked nearly every Monday throughout the year as has been the case for some 20 years.

Highlights of accomplishments include:

- *Green Retreat House – power washed and stained.
- *Rathbun Retreat House – new carpeting, furnishings, power washed and stained.
- *New phone lines to the Lawrence building and Churchill-Cary Health Lodge.
- *New John Deere tractor/mower purchased.
- *Lawrence Building power washed and stained.
- *Tillinghast – new windows
- *Shaub Dining Lodge – fireplace recapped, new flue and re-bricked throughout. Completion of interior staining; exterior staining in process.
- *Motter Resource Center – Power washed and stained, new windows in the front and painting and refurbishing the interior.
- *Breezymere – Interior repairs: some completed and others in process.
- *Director's House – new exterior siding and roof shingles.
- *Meadowwood Conference Center – new roof over section where it leaked, new freezer container area, new outside lighting along pathway, and extensive fire protection work.
- *Barn foundation work, restoring use of section collapsed in the past.
- *Lake weed control annual treatment.
- * All buildings placed on annual pest inspection service contract.
- *Scrap metal from old equipment and material on grounds was cleaned up and sold.
- *A system for handling fuel storage was developed using a used pickup truck partially donated.
- *Churchill-Cary Health Lodge – new ramp and other work completed by North Scituate Baptist.
- *Camp store adoption: will be renamed the Hansen Trading Post as a result of a donation from the Hansen family. Work has begun by volunteers to enlarge and refurbish the building.
- *Stone wall repair and rebuild along Exeter Road.
- *Many other jobs have been done to improve signage, landscaping and generally increased the appeal of the property.
- *Many other jobs are on our agenda for the future. Some have been on the agenda for some time; others are added weekly.

We have more than 17 buildings located on the property; several are in various stages of adoption – either by individuals or churches donating time and/or finances. Presently we are seeking adoption for the following:

- *Tefft Chapel
- *Breezumere
- *Barn
- *Green Retreat

If you are interested, please contact Liz Lussier or myself for details.

J. Whitney Bancroft, Interim Temporary Chair

THE BAPTIST FUND OF RHODE ISLAND

The 2006 year was spent determining and organizing which invested funds are the responsibility of BFRI, and submitting to the Department of Stewardship and Administration a proposal regarding the makeup of the Baptist Fund committee: S&A approved the proposal and by consensus the understanding that BFRI have control of the funds without consulting S&A regarding their distribution.

Purpose: 1)...to support and create regional and local church ministries and to challenge individuals and churches of ABCORI to new levels of giving to the Baptist Fund (adapted from the Oct. 25, 2005 report of the BFRI Task Force) 2) ... to provide grants for new forms of renewal ministries and pastoral support for revitalization of American Baptist local churches. 3)...to encourage American Baptist churches in their community outreach by providing annual grants for special ministries of Christian social concern. 4)...to assist American Baptist churches that have emergency building and capital improvement needs with grants and loans.

Composition: *Chairperson* - appointed by the chair of S&A per ABCORI bylaws; the Committee chair must be a member of the S&A Department: *Secretary* - selected from committee membership. *Treasurer* – the ABCORI Assistant Treasurer: *S&A Dept. Chairperson* or a designated representative in addition to the BFRI Committee chair:

Dept. of Church Life Chairperson or designated representative: *Committee on Stewardship and Mission Support Chairperson* or designated representative: *Two members at-large* to be recruited by the members of the BFRI committee whose names will be submitted to S&A for ratification. Members at-large shall serve a term of three (3) years and may be reappointed. *Members by virtue of their offices: ABCORI Executive Minister and ABCORI President All are voting member:*

Meetings to be held quarterly.

One church requested financial support for emergency repairs, and after a member of the BFRI committee met with the pastor and a member of the congregation, the Committee acted favorably on the request.

Annual Report submitted for the BFRI by Vonnie Dutton

INVESTMENT COMMITTEE

As of 12/29/06 the value of ABCORI Fund A (Unrestricted) esd \$2,951,619 plus C E D (Community Economic Development) investments of \$ 350,000 for a total of \$3,301,619. The value of ABCORI Fund B (Restricted) was \$4,768,069 plus C E D investments of \$350,000 for a total of \$5,118,069. The value of the total portfolio was \$8,419,688.

The return on investments managed by Bernstein Investment Research & Management was 11.6% for Fund A and 11.9% for Fund B, after fees for the year 2006.

The revised Policy Statement with an addendum by Bernstein has been signed and placed in the policies & procedure manual.

An informational meeting of ABCORI Pooled Fund members, prospective members and anyone interested in knowing more about investing endowment monies was held in February with a light supper and presentation from the Treasurer of ABCORI. Bernstein Investment Research & Management, Investors Bank & Trust and Community Economic Development, with a question and answer period following. There were 33 in attendance including staff and presenters with 10 churches represented. In accordance with our policy of investing 10% of our portfolio on a five year trailing average in Community Economic Development (C E D) out current investments are:

\$25,000.ABEC (American Baptist Extension Corp.)

4.75% due 8/30/2010

\$75,000 ABEC 5.1% due 7/19/11

\$100,000 I C E (Institute of Community Economics)

4% due 6/28/09

\$150,000 CleanScape 3½% due 12/15/09

\$350,000 WND (Woonsocket Neighborhood Development Corp.) 5.5% due 5/15/11

For a total of \$700,000.

This is just about 10% of our portfolio so we are fully invested in C E D's.

Barbara J. Staples, Chair

COMMITTEE ON STEWARDSHIP AND MISSION SUPPORT

January: CSMS already immersed in projects: Jill Paterson, Minister of Mission Support provided an overview of her projected efforts, as well as work for CSMS. Rev. John McCulley, leader of Stewardship Consultant Team (Bob Auld, Vivian Balcom, Judy Brown & John Wolcott) kept CSMS informed on churches being served and efforts for the March '06 Ecumenical Stewardship Event. **March:** Reviewed ABCORI congregations' support (past 5 years) of United Missions, as well as annual special offerings. Except for response through OGHS to hurricane disasters, mission support has been declining: This means loss of income for ABCORI ministries. **May:** New members, Vi and Paul Becker, welcomed. Major reports received from the Stewardship Team and Minister of Mission Support. Preliminary work begun for the 9/25/06 Mission Celebration. **June:** Details completed and assignments accepted for the Mission Banquet and Celebration. Alan Martin, a faithful member of CSMS resigned. **August:** Responsibilities for the Mission Celebration accepted, and for Dr. Reid Trulson, the missionary in residence. **August:** Final touches on the 9/25/06 event and itinerary for Dr. Trulson. **October:** Reviewed Mission Events – participants thanked ; the offering to support mission trips in 2007 totaled \$811.62. Jill Paterson resigned as of Dec. 31, 2006 to pursue a different professional course.

Vonnie Dutton, chair, with heartfelt thanks for faithful CSMS members: Paul and Vi Becker, Rev. Alan Doksansky, Al Martin, Rev. John McCulley, John Wolcott, Jill Paterson, Nancy Bancroft and Rev. Don Rasmussen

DEPARTMENT OF CHURCH LIFE

The Department of Church Life (DCL) has met six times this past year. Our major focus has continued to be looking at our purpose and see how we can help fulfill the goals of the region that are within our area of responsibility.

Our purpose, from the by-laws is: The Department shall concern itself with the welfare and well-being of all the churches of the corporation and all aspects of corporate church life and ministry. Areas of concern to be addressed may include the following: evangelism; Christian education; mission education; camping; conferencing; ecumenicity; social issues.

ABCORI's 5 year goals, from 2005 have to do with promoting congregational wellness, evangelism and outreach, new church development, and communication.

To continue promoting, encouraging, and providing opportunities to achieve these goals in our churches, we have continued to be involved in **New Life 2010**. New Life 2010 challenges churches to look at new ways to be involved in outreach, caring ministries and new church plants. We have a special committee that continues to administer this program with Donna Sherman as chair. If your church is not yet a New Life 2010 church, we encourage you to prayerfully consider it.

We have also continued to encourage churches to consider going through the **Natural Church Development** process. NCD is a tool that helps a church look at its strength and weaknesses especially around 8 areas that have been found to be common for healthy churches. Coaches and resources are available to help strengthen areas that are weaker. Once strengthened the church then is a healthier church. So far we have had about 22 churches use this resource here in ABCORI. If you are interested, please talk to our Executive Minister and find out more about this great tool for your church.

This past year, workshops were provided through the Program Committee on Evangelism, Missions, and Children's/youth ministries.

Youth Ministries is being overseen thanks to Matt Black and a team of others with ideas on conferences and youth leader training. The Motter Resource Center, as well, is up and running. Thanks to all who are giving of themselves and their gifts to make these areas exciting and forward moving.

It has been an active and productive year for the Department of Church Life. Thanks to all who have contributed to that end. We covert you prayers for the year ahead.

Respectfully Submitted
Rev. George Barclay, Jr., Chair

SPIRITUAL LIFE COMMITTEE

Members of the Spiritual Life Committee, Dr. Linda Bausserman, Rev. Leigh Johnson and Beverly Rathbun, gathered in July of 2006 to plan the Ruah Prayer Days for the 2006-07 season. Four quarterly sessions were scheduled: Oct. 28 - A Cloud of Witnesses, Dec. 9 - Making room in our lives for Christ, Feb. 10 - Window Time, and Apr. 21. - Delight in God...as God Delights in us. For more than 10 years Ruah Prayer Days have been held on Saturdays in Tefft Chapel at Canonicus. It is a day set aside for prayer, reflection and sharing in a small group setting to promote spiritual growth. Participation is between 5-15 people, usually with two leaders. Each Ruah has a theme with readings, scripture, and music to help guide attendants through the day. There is always plenty of 'free' time given to enjoy the natural surroundings, meditate, write or draw. Regular leadership in the past included Rev. Dr. Don Crosby, Rev. Donna Maggi, Marilyn Greene, Rev. Clay Berry , and Rev. Dr. Charles Hartman. Over the years there have been a faithful core or people who have come to Ruah and been blessed.

We are all called as Christ's Disciples to come away from our busy lives and take time to quiet ourselves so that we might experience the presence of God more fully. It is the hope of the Spiritual Life Committee that Ruah Prayer Days will continue in the years to come.

Beverly Rathbun

NEW LIFE 2010 COMMITTEE

As a part of the Department of Church Life, the New Life 2010 Committee works to promote the New Life goals of Evangelism, Church Planting, Caring Ministries, and Congregational Transformation. Our goal is that by the year 2010, one third of the churches in our region will have adopted New Life goals. At this time, there are 16 New Life churches, or about 22%. A sampling of their New Life goals include supporting the new church plants in RI and mission efforts around the world, reaching out through small group activities and community outreach, implementing Natural Church Development goals, handicapped accessibility, homeless and prison ministries, and many more.

Each church that commits to New Life 2010 goals intentionally becomes part of a group of Christians who are committed to advancing the work of the Lord across the state. Each church receives a certificate from ABCUSA, and displays the roving New Life banner for 4-6 weeks. Each one joins an email network where a variety of questions, answers, and New Life information is shared.

The New Life Committee also works with the Executive Minister to support the new churches that are being planted in our region. We have 6 new churches, with 2 more potential churches. These congregations face many difficult circumstances including with language barriers and worship space issues, and the committee tries to encourage and support their work. We are excited about the potential for growth in the area of new church plants.

If your church is working in any of the areas of New Life focus, please consider joining the following New Life 2010 churches in Rhode Island, and maybe by 2010 we could reach 100%!

Calvary Baptist Church
Community Baptist Church (Newport)
Community Church of Providence
East Greenwich First Baptist Church
First Baptist Church Hope Valley
First Baptist Church in America
Greenville Baptist Church
Meshanticut Park Baptist Church
North Scituate Baptist Church
Norwood Baptist Church
Pawtuxet Baptist Church
People's Baptist Church
Phenix Baptist Church
Shawomet Baptist Church
Tabernacle Baptist Church
Wakefield Baptist Church

Donna Sherman, Chair

PROGRAM COMMITTEE

The Program Committee of ABCORI consists of volunteers who meet once a month and help schedule programs, conferences and special events for our member churches. We also serve as an oversight committee for Canonicus' summer camping program by reviewing surveys from campers and "listening" to suggestions from talented leaders. We especially appreciate Ann Aldrich and Charlie Hartman's experience over the years at "our" camp. We greatly appreciate the wonderful staff at ABCORI! We believe Liliana Da Valle, Liz Lussier and Matt Black will continue the great tradition of Canonicus. Don Rasmussen, Annalize and Andrew Gilfillan deserve our thanks for the great work they did in the past years.

2006 had several highlights including an annual seminar for ABCORI church members. We sponsored a Leadership Development Seminar on September 10, 2006. The three areas of interest were Christian Education with the Rev. John Houliker, Missions with Jill Patterson and Evangelism with George Barclay. We had a wonderful response from the participants and the event was a great success.

In 2007, we desire to hold a workshop that would offer the ABCORI family help in "Discerning Gifts". A Massachusetts pastor, who has strengths in this area, has been contacted and is interested in leading the workshop. We plan to support other events including Baptist Heritage Weekend in November '07 and Stewardship workshops held in April and September. The Northwest Cluster of ABCORI began holding services on Saturday Evenings at 5 pm. The host churches are North Foster (first Saturday), Summit (second and fourth Saturdays), North Scituate (third Saturday) and Mt. Vernon (fifth Saturday). We are presently reviewing the level of success of this outreach effort.

We spent a considerable amount of time reviewing results from a survey. The results offered suggestions on areas of interest from our constituent churches. The workshops will endeavor to focus in on these suggested topics.

Another part of our function is getting volunteers for various events such as brunches, luncheons and "Open House". It is a joy to see people volunteering their time at the camp and during special events and it provides the opportunity for the staff to continue their various ministries.

During 2006, we have been an active committee and we are looking for others who would like to share in our work. Please consider becoming a part of the Program Committee. Please contact Bob Auld if you are interested in sharing your gifts.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert S. Auld
Chairperson of Program Committee

REPRESENTATIVE TO THE GENERAL BOARD, ABC/USA

The withdrawal of the Region of the Pacific Southwest,

The denomination's stance on homosexuality,

The lack of financial support for the Office of the General Secretary and the representative process,

The possibilities for the need to restructure the governance of the denomination to meet the needs of a new time,

The possibility of selling the denominational headquarters in Valley Forge and moving to other quarters,

The selection of a new executive director for International Ministries, and

The approval of National Ministries initiative on Children in Poverty.

It is too early to tell what the ultimate result will be of the Region of the Pacific Southwest withdrawing but there is some indication that there are enough churches that want to remain connected with the ABCUSA so that a new region will be established. More to come.

The Regional Executives through their committee are working on proposals for a denominational stance on homosexuality and the possibility of restructuring the denomination's governance. More to come on these issues.

A study is being done on the feasibility of selling the present headquarters of ABCUSA. More to come on this one.

The Rev. Reid Trulsen was elected to be the new executive director of International Ministries. Many of you will remember that he was the speaker for our Mission's Celebration last September.

We will be learning more about the initiative on Children in Poverty as we become involved in the next several years.

Our denomination and its ministries are funded by endowments left by appreciative people in the past, our giving to United Mission and the 4 major offerings during the year. It should be noted that a large part of United Mission comes back to the regions for their support. The ABCUSA website states that the region is getting 65% of United Mission but we are led to believe that this has been changed to a 63.4% figure. The Office of the General Secretary gets 9.9%, International Ministries gets 5.67%, National Ministries gets 5.67%, the representative process gets 2.52%, and the rest is divided up to a variety of ministries. To keep both the life of our region and our national denomination alive we need to continue to be or get serious in supporting them through United Mission.

The 4 offerings are important as well. In addition to allowing our congregants the opportunity to demonstrate their interest and support for the ministries our churches should consider putting these offerings in their budgets.

The American for Christ offering taken usually early in the year is the offering that supports our work through National Ministries.

The One Great Hour of Sharing Offering serves both IM and NM and our partners throughout the world and in this country. This offering supports our ministries of emergency relief, refugee work, and disaster

rehabilitation, and development assistance.

The World Missions offering is the major support of our International Ministries. It supports our mission work throughout the world.

The MMBB Thank Offering is our way to provide help for our clergy, missionaries, and staff who are confronted with emergency expenses. It also provides a small thank you gift for our retired clergy and missionaries.

We call this to your attention to encourage you to accept your responsibilities to keep enabling our American Baptist family to provide ministries in this country and throughout the world.

We ask you to pray for us and to ask us questions concerning any bits of news or rumors you might have heard about our denomination. We also covet your input on the issues that we will be facing in the coming years.

Peggy Johnson and H.A. (Hank) Pedersen

AMERICAN BAPTIST WOMEN'S MINISTRIES OF RHODE ISLAND

During the second year of our national theme, “Born Again . . . to be Wild about Jesus”, the Executive Board has been focusing on communicating who ABWM of RI is and inviting women to join us. One of the supporting scriptures for our theme is Romans 12:2: “don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but be a new and different person (born again!), with a fresh newness in all you do and think”. I think this includes groups like ABWM of RI; we need to do some new and different things and not always copy the things of the past. Other “things” from the past, need to be held up, and celebrated and supported. This is a challenge that the Executive Board is working hard to meet; an awesome group of dedicated women.

We had some exciting gatherings this past year, starting with the June Conference 2006. Since “Children in Poverty” is the mission study focus for ABWM-USA, a Round Table: Wild Women for Christ’s Children, was presented for women to consider finding their voices and making noise for children in RI who are hungry. Rev. Sandra Hasenauer, editor of “Vital Woman” magazine, was our speaker on Developing Leadership Skills. The Seekonk Memorial Praise Team provided wonderful music.

We participated in the Fall Festival at Canonicus with an informational booth. “Mission Matters” was our theme in October 2006 and Janet Hogan, National Coordinator of Mission & Service, was an inspirational speaker. We also learned how to roll bandages for White Cross, make beaded earrings, plan fundraisers for our women’s groups, and learned about our state project, Murrow Indian Children’s Home. Over 50 Church World Services Baby Kits were assembled for Lebanon. Special music provided by Jennifer Salisbury, accompanied by Liz Lussier.

January 2007 Spiritual Retreat, our time to re-connect, renew, and recharge ourselves and prepare to begin another New Year - full speed ahead with a “fresh newness in all we do and think”. Rev. Dr. Marilyn Weekes spoke on the “Real Price of Joy”. We were delighted that 96 women attended, including 41 “first-timers” and we made many new friends. We were especially happy to welcome our new Executive Minister, Rev. Dr. Liliana DaValle.

Georgiaville Baptist Church hosted our Spring Meeting. We heard a report from Janeen Rawson and others from Berean Baptist, on a recent trip to help the Habitat for Humanity building in Gauthier, Mississippi. Rev. Rick Harris from Valley Forge also spoke on National Ministries and how our America for Christ offering is being used in the hurricane ravaged areas. A special recognition of women Pastors and Pastor’s wives took place. A purse auction and donations raised over \$ 1300.00 for our state project, Murrow Indian Children’s Home in Oklahoma. Marilyn Gustafson spoke passionately about the crisis the home faces and how we can help.

Officers for 2006-2007:

President	Sue Maiocchi	Berean
Secretary	Marguerite Thomas	Calvary
Treasurer	Carol Rathbun	Meshanticut Park
Communications	Laurie Robertson	First, West Warwick
Coord. Of Personal Development	Michelle Sullivan	Calvary, Providence
Love Gift Associate	Annette Dunn	Georgiaville
Coord. Of Church & Community	Holly Swift	First, East Greenwich
Coord. Of Mission & Service	Marilyn Gustafson	Wakefield
Conference Coordinator	Elaine Boyd	Warwick Central
White Cross Associate	Janet Chermis	Lakewood
Resource Coordinator	Sandra Kelly	Georgiaville
Immediate Past President	Fran Pedersen	Shawomet

Resources: American Baptist Women’s Ministries – www.abministries.org

Sue Maiocchi, President

MINISTERS COUNCIL

Last year the president, William Crawford wrote the following: the Ministers Council is a membership and professional organization open to all American Baptist clergy. We are related to the national ABC Ministers Council with representation on the organization's Senate. The members of the executive committee also participate in the work of the Standing Committee on the Ministry. This is still true.

This year we held four meetings of the Council:

September 26, 2006 at Canonicus Camping and Conference Center

Members of the ABCORI Executive Minister Search Committee were present to give us an update on the process and progress of the search, hear our concerns and answer our questions.

November 28, 2006 at Warwick Central Baptist Church

Hazel Roper, our Area Representative from the Ministers and Missionaries Board, presented the latest information about pastoral support packages. Her presentation was timely and helpful.

February 27, 2007 at Church of the Master

Evan Howard reminded us that as pastors we, like Jesus, are story tellers charged with telling the story in ways that captivate the listener's attention and encourage him to grow in faith and understanding. Also he shared with us his latest book – watch for its publication.

March 27, 2007 at North Scituate Baptist Church

We met with the Reverend Dr. Liliana DaValle, our new Executive Minister, heard her hopes and dreams for her ministry with ABCORI and engaged in conversation with her.

Our deep appreciation is extended to the host pastors and presenters for these programs.

The October Conference for 2006 was cancelled so that our membership could attend the seminar sponsored by the Rhode Island State Council of Churches and the Attorney General Task Force to Improve End of Life Care. Many of our members were in attendance at this excellent seminar. This year the October Conference will be on held on Tuesday, October 23rd from 9:00am – 3:00pm at Canonicus Camping and Conference Center. The subject is story telling in worship and will be led by Pat and Ken Parker from Maine. Mark you calendar now.

The officers for 2007-2008 are

President	Ethel Corbin
Vice-President	David Mitchell
Secretary	Marie Clark-Carpenter
Treasurer	Shirley Fortin
Retreat Chairperson	Darin Collins
Program Chairperson	Robert Auld
Senator	Leigh Johnson

Rev. Ethel Corbin, President

BAPTIST HOME OF RHODE ISLAND

The Baptist Home of Rhode Island has enjoyed continued growth of its funds which at year-end were slightly over \$6,500,000.

The Finance Committee, under the leadership of Tom Archer, treasurer, has set a budget of \$334,300 for the year 2007. The income for this budget is derived from the investment portfolio, using a five-year moving average of the portfolio market value. A standardized draw of 5% is used as a baseline.

The budget includes:

\$130,750 for Eldercare Ministries which covers the director's salary, the chaplains' program, grandparents camp and administrative expenses.

\$ 44,530 for grants to the churches

\$159,020 for the John Clarke Retirement Center for nursing services, rent

Subsidies, nursing home chaplains, security expenses, transportation and held bed days.

These ministries are in compliance with Object, Article II of our constitution:

In accordance with the Articles of Association of Non-Business Corporations, the Corporation shall do all that is necessary or incidental to carry out the object of assisting in providing a Christian living environment for aging men and women by ministering to their educational, recreational, residential, and related needs.

Glenn Fresch, chair of the grants committee presented a request from the North Foster Baptist Church for \$3400 to upgrade their sound system. It was approved. On Sunday, February 11th your president attended the dedication of this fine sound system.

Tom Archer and Vivian Searle represented the Baptist Home Board at Bernstein's Annual Client Conference at the Four Seasons Hotel in Boston. John Polidori assured us that the BHRI is growing in a changing market.

Nancy Cyr-Larson has served the BHB for several years, the last five as our secretary. I thank her for the contribution that she has made to this board through her thorough and accurate reporting and genuine interest in the ministry to which we have been called.

Vivian G. Searle, President

Officers and Members of the Board of Directors 2007- 2008

President (08) - Vivian Searle (2)
Vice-President (08) – Rev. Harry Bronkar (2)
Secretary (09) – Dr. Lynne Holden (1)

Treasurer (09) – Thomas Archer
Asst. Treasurer (09) – William Johnson (1)
Executive Minister – Dr. Liliana Da Valle

Terms Ending 2008

Glenn Fresch (1)
Rev. Alejandro Gaete (1)
Aldyn Reid (1)

Terms Ending 2009

Tom Kennedy
Dr. Charles Smith
Richard Webb

Terms Ending 2010

Linda Anderson (2)
Richard Pierce (2)
Naomi Kiggins (2)

RHODE ISLAND BAPTIST EDUCATION SOCIETY

For over two hundred years, The RI Baptist Education Society (RIBES) has provided financial support, in the form of loans, to women and men preparing for ministry. RIBES loans are for applicants who have a committed allegiance to an American Baptist Church or ministry in Rhode Island and whose intent is to serve within the American Baptist denomination. Loans are primarily for students preparing for full time church vocations. RIBES also administers the Motter Fund, a grant given to one student throughout his or her seminary education.

RIBES also assists students with the cost of the Center for Career Development which is a requirement for ordination.

This year we assisted six students attending Andover Newton Theological School: Antonette dePina, Sheila DuBose, Annalize Gilfillan, Steve Guilmain, Debra Hanson, and Rebecca Law, One student at the Baptist Seminary of the West: Blake Horridge. One student at Palmer Theological Seminary: Geneva Urquhart. And four students at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary (CUME): Barry Arruda, Kristen Arruda, Joseph Campbell, and Michelle Sullivan.

We have three students graduating: Steve Guilmain, Sheila DuBose, and Geneva Urquhart. We wish them God's blessings on their ministries.

We are in need of a recording and a corresponding secretary at this time.

Members of the RIBES Board 2007-2008

Class of 2008

Rev. Marie Clark-Carpenter
Ms Susan Colantonio
Rev Darin Collins
Rev Dr David Mitchell
Rev. Nancy Phelan

Class of 2009

Rev Robert Auld
Mr. Ernie Carpenter
Ms. Frances Pedersen
Ms Gladys Thomas
Mr. John Tucker

Class of 2010

Rev Camille Bedard
Mr. Steve Guilmain
Ms. Carolyn Bronkar
Rev Patricia Harrison
Rev Scott Roberts

Officers for 2007-2008

President	Rev Marie Clark-Carpenter
Vice President	Rev Scott Roberts
Corresponding Secretary	Rev. Nancy Phelan
Recording Secretary	Rev. Robert Auld
Treasurer	Mr. John Tucker

THE RHODE ISLAND BAPTIST HERITAGE CENTER

Our Goals: To provide assistance and/or guidance for those interested in pursuing studies of our Baptist Heritage; to provide in Rhode Island a means of keeping alive the vital heritage of our Baptist origins; to present the role of Baptists in the heritage and traditions of the United States; and to provide guidance to our RI Baptist churches in the keeping of their individual church history.

After lengthy discussions with the American Baptist Historical Society about settling their collections here in Rhode Island they decided to relocate on the campus of Mercer University in Atlanta, GA. All our board members worked very hard and are to be congratulated. We are especially grateful for the fine presentation made by Paul Becker and Don Rasmussen at the ABHS Board meeting in September when the decision was made. We remained in the running until the very end which is a testimony to what we have to offer our denomination (and all Baptists) here in Rhode Island. We thank everyone for their support and encouragement.

Following that decision we realized a new opportunity greeting us as we find ourselves with a new partner in Baptist life and studies in Mercer University and the world-class program they are developing there. To initialize this partnership we are developing a Baptist Heritage Weekend for November 3-4 featuring noted Baptist scholar, Walter Shurden from Mercer, and Deborah VanBroekhoven from ABHS. The event will be co-sponsored by the Massachusetts American Baptist Historical Society, a partnership we seek to expand upon as we pursue our mutual efforts to preserve and promote our Baptist heritage. The event will be nationally promoted and we hope to welcome Baptists from around the country.

We are also pleased to announce some financial viability! With our new treasurer, Lou Tripler, our accounting system is in place and we now ready to solicit and receive donations. As of December 31 we have assets totaling \$515.00 and are preparing a budget for 2007-2008.

Our thanks to all who have been supportive (and patient) with our efforts, realizing that just as history takes time to unfold, so will our plans to preserve and proclaim this great heritage we share as Baptist Christians.

Nominating Report: 2007 - 2008

Officers: President: Rev. Paul Hanson
Vice President: Nancy Cyr-Larson
Secretary: Rev. Clay Berry
Treasurer: Rev. Lou Tripler

Directors: 2008: Paul Becker
2009: Roberta A. Ritchie, Rev. Dr. Charles Hartman
2010: Dr. J. Stanley Lemons, Rev. Dr. Donald R. Rasmussen

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Clay Berry

CAMP CANONICUS STAFF ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

This year the CCSAA has been involved with the administration of the Warren L. Adams Memorial Fund. We awarded a total of \$3,760.00 in partial camperships to Camp Canonicus. Camperships were awarded to 27 youth from 7 ABCORI churches and one former staff member's child.

To be eligible for a campership, a youth must be a child of a former staff member OR attend an ABCORI Church, Sunday School or Youth Group. An application for a partial campership to Camp Canonicus may be obtained from your local church or at the Canonicus office.

FINANCIALS 2006

	Ministry With Churches					
	Actual	Budget	Variance	Var %	2005	2007 Budget
Revenue						
5002 · America For Christ Offering	7,650	8,000	(350)	(4.4%)	7,656	\$8,000
5003 · Regional Offering	4,751	4,400	351	8.0%	4,564	\$5,000
5100 · United Mission Giving	117,845	132,000	(14,155)	(10.7%)	134,454	\$130,000
5123 · Honoraria	350	400	(50)	(12.5%)	50	\$400
5201 · Gifts & Donations	109	1,000	(891)	(89.1%)	413	\$9,600
5802 · Endowment 4.5%	40,500	40,500	0	-	68	\$70,000
5905 · Baptist Home of RI - Office	6,600	6,600	0	-	22,800	\$6,600
5906 · Abcori Annual Gathering	2,125	3,600	(1,475)	(41.0%)	7,100	\$2,500
5908 · AB Foundation Income	3,692	3,600	92	2.5%	3,642	\$1,000
Total Revenue	\$183,622	\$200,100	(\$16,478)	(8.2%)	\$182,247	\$233,100
Expense						
Personnel Services						
6010 · Professional Staff Salaries	50,500	50,500	-	0.0%	59,049	\$50,000
6011 · Professional Staff Housing	22,279	22,300	(21)	0.1%	21,279	\$20,000
6020 · Support Staff Salaries	47,878	36,300	11,578	(31.9%)	24,980	\$54,000
6101 · Medical Insurance	20,791	17,300	3,491	(20.2%)	16,260	\$19,000
6102 · M&M Pension	13,583	13,600	(17)	0.1%	13,144	\$13,530
6103 · FICA Employer	3,110	2,800	310	(11.1%)	2,628	\$4,650
6116 · Social Security Offset	5,567	5,600	(33)	0.6%	5,380	\$5,350
6201 · Prof Expense Exec Min	3,550	3,500	50	(1.4%)	4,644	\$6,000
6222 · Professional Expense - WMS	1,758	1,000	758	(75.8%)	2,009	\$1,000
6807 · Professional Expense Fin Mgr	1,687	3,500	(1,813)	51.8%	3,059	\$1,000
Total Personnel Services	170,702	156,400	14,302	(9.1%)	152,431	174,530
Admin/Occupancy Exp						
6560 · Payroll Expenses	2,385	1,000	1,385	(138.5%)	1,321	\$2,400
6601 · Insurance - Buildings	5,068	5,750	(682)	11.9%	4,920	\$6,550
6602 · Electricity	2,802	2,000	802	(40.1%)	1,081	\$2,200
6603 · Natural Gas	1,081	2,600	(1,519)	58.4%	2,031	\$2,000
6701 · Maintenance Supplies	985	1,000	(15)	1.5%	986	\$4,000
6801 · Office Supplies	3,146	2,400	746	(31.1%)	1,434	\$2,500
6802 · Postage	1,392	2,200	(808)	36.7%	1,442	\$2,200
	Actual	Budget	Variance	Var %	2005	2007 Budget
6803 · Telephone	3,264	2,625	639	(24.4%)	3,918	\$3,500
6805 · Audit & Consulting	10,695	8,000	2,695	(33.7%)	6,300	\$15,000
6806 · Office Equipment	935	1,200	(265)	22.0%	945	\$1,500
7706 · Fees & Dues	512			100.0%	883	\$600

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Variance</u>	<u>Var %</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2007 Budget</u>
Total Admin/Occupancy Exp	32,266	28,775	3,491	(12.1%)	25,261	42,450
Dept. of Church Life						
6030 · Consultants	1,000	1,500	(500)	33.3%	0	\$5,500
7703-1 · Youth Ministries	50	200	(150)	74.8%	0	\$1,000
7712 · Church Consultation	2,067	3,500	(1,434)	41.0%	105	200
7713 · Ruah	-	200	(200)	100.0%	0	500
7714 · Natural church Development	1,366	500	866	(173.2%)	174	\$500
8001-1 · AB Women's Ministries	1,000	1,000	0	0.0%	505	\$1,850
8002 · AB Men's Ministries	-	200	(200)	100.0%	(117)	\$1,000
8003-1 · Martin Luther King Breakfast	165	150	15	(10.0%)	295	\$150
8006 · Nehemiah Leadership	500	500	0	0.0%	500	500
8007 · RI Peace Mission	500	500	0	0.0%	490	\$500
Total Dept. of Church Life	6,648	8,250	(1,602)	19.4%	1,952	11,700
Dept. of S & A						
6809 · Miscellaneous S & A	139	100	39	(39.1%)	1,094	\$1,250
6819 · Volunteer Expense	413	350	63	(17.9%)	(10)	\$350
7703-2 · Annual Gathering	(307)	1,500	(1,807)	120.4%	2,593	\$2,000
7704 · Copyright license	223	225	(2)	0.9%	215	\$220
7706-2 · Regional Exec Min Council	300	300	0	0.0%	0	\$0
7708-1 · AB Foundation	4,026	3,600	426	(11.8%)	3,529	\$0
7710 · Resource & Literature	84	200	(116)	58.0%	55	\$200
7711 · Comm Stew Mission Support	513	400	113	(28.3%)	229	\$400
Total Dept. of S & A	5,391	6,675	(1,284)	19.2%	7,704	\$4,420
Total Expense	215,008	200,100	14,908	(7.5%)	187,348	\$233,100
ABCORI - MWChurches	(\$31,385)	-	(\$31,385)	-100%	(\$5,101)	-
ABCORI - Canonicus	(\$28,014)	-	(\$28,014)	-100%	\$44,717	\$9,850
ABCORI TOTAL 2006	(\$59,399)	-	(\$59,399)	-100%	\$39,616	\$9,850

Baptist Home Board Financial Statement

As of December 31, 2006

<u>BHB INCOME</u>	<u>2006 Budget</u>	<u>YTD Actual thru 12/31/06</u>	<u>Var to Bud</u>	<u>Var %</u>	<u>2007 Budget</u>
Total Portfolio Income	\$320,515	\$299,816	(20,699)	-7.7%	
Interest Income	\$225	\$10	(215)	-113.4%	
Trust Fund Distribution	\$4,780	\$6,736	1,956	49%	
TOTAL OPERATING INCOME	\$325,520	\$306,562	(18,958)	-7.0%	\$334,300
<u>BHB EXPENSES</u>					
<u>Elder Care Ministry</u>					
Salary Expense	\$56,450	56,451	(1)	-	\$57,580
Pension	\$9,030	9,032	(2)	0.0%	\$9,220
Medical	\$9,710	11,796	(2,086)	-25.8%	\$11,000
FICA	\$4,320	4,339	(19)	-0.5%	\$4,400
Mileage	\$1,500	1,236	264	21.1%	\$1,000
Continuing Education	\$500	500	-	-100%	\$500
Wk's Comp/Grp Life Ins	\$360	394	(34)	(0.11)	\$300
Subtotal - Director	81,870	83,748	(1,878)	-2.8%	\$84,000
<u>ECM Program Expense</u>					
Chaplaincy Program-General	\$35,000	22,655	12,345	42%	\$35,000
Program Development	\$500	748	(248)	-59.0%	\$1,000
Older Adult Week	\$0	-	-	-	\$1,000
Grandparents Camp Subsidy Exp	\$1,500	324	1,176	94.1%	\$2,000
Visitation Training	\$50	-	50	125%	\$50
Simeon Ministries	\$50	-	50	125%	\$50
Volunteer Banquet	\$250	248	2	1%	\$300
Subtotal - Programs	\$37,350	\$23,975	13,375	43.0%	\$39,400
<u>ECM Admin. Expense</u>					
Rent	\$6,600	6,600	-	-	\$6,600
Postage	\$300	127	173	69.3%	\$200
Internet/ISP	\$300	-	300	120%	\$0
Copies	\$200	50	150	0.88	\$150
Office Supplies	\$250	301	(51)	-24.3%	\$250
Resource Literature	\$50	35	15	-100%	\$100
Fees and Dues	\$80	-	80	114%	\$50
Subtotal - Administrative	\$7,780	\$7,113	\$667	10.3%	7,350
TOTAL Elder Care Ministry	\$127,000	\$114,835	\$12,165	11.5%	\$130,750
<u>BHB Special Ministries</u>					
Grants (to other churches)	\$40,000	3,734	36,266	121%	\$40,000
L&P Fees / (Consulting)	\$1,000	130	870	116%	\$500
Accounting Serv - Audit	\$3,500	3,000	500	-	\$3,500
Postage & Supplies	\$500	-	500	125%	\$500
Sec. of State Filing Fee	\$20	65	(45)	(2.25)	\$30
Subtotal BHB Special Ministries	\$45,020	\$6,929	\$38,091	122.2%	\$44,530
<u>John Clark Retirement Center</u>					
Nursing Services	\$57,500	51,082	6,418	13.4%	\$59,220

<u>BHB INCOME</u>	<u>2006 Budget</u>	<u>YTD Actual thru 12/31/06</u>	<u>Var to Bud</u>	<u>Var %</u>	<u>2007 Budget</u>
Rent subsidies	\$40,000	38,623	1,377	4.1%	\$40,800
Nursing Home Chaplains	\$30,000	24,335	5,665	22.7%	\$32,000
Security Expense	\$15,000	12,018	2,982	23.9%	\$15,000
Transportation	\$8,000	12,000	(4,000)	-60.0%	\$8,000
Held Bed Days	\$3,000	6,528	(3,528)	-100%	\$4,000
Subtotal - JCRC Program	\$153,500	\$144,586	\$8,914	7.0%	\$159,020
GRAND TOTAL EXPENSES	\$325,520	\$266,350	\$59,170	<u>22.3%</u>	\$334,300
Net Income	-	<u>\$40,212</u>	<u>\$40,212</u>	100.0 %	-

* Financial results represent Unaudited figures and are subject to restatement.

ABCORI Annual Business Meeting, Part A
Monday, March 6, 2006 at 7:00 p.m.
Phillips Memorial Baptist Church, 565 Pontiac Ave, Cranston, RI

Don Crosby led off the evening with a time of singing, with Martha Sobaje at the piano. Nancy Bancroft announced that Ethel Stickney passed away March 1. She was a member of Greenville Baptist Church, and active for many years in ABCORI and AB Women's Ministries of RI.

Peggy Johnson led in prayer

Annual Meeting of RI Baptist Heritage Center

This meeting was called to order by President, Rev. Clay Berry, who read Jeremiah 6:16. Clay announced that RI is one of the two finalists for location of American Baptist Historical Society archives. He commended the John Clarke Trust and Baptist Home Board for their movie on John Clarke, which will be shown at the May Annual Gathering.

Nominating Committee report adopted as presented:

Officers

President: Rev. Clay Berry
Vice President: Rev. Paul Hanson
Secretary: Nancy Cyr-Larson
Treasurer: Rev. Lou Tripler

Directors

2007: Dr. J. Stanley Lemons, Rev. Dr. Donald R. Rasmussen
2008: Paul Becker, Rev. L. Edgar Stone
2009: Roberta A. Ritchie, Rev. Dr. Charles Hartman

Clay expressed gratitude for everyone's support.

Adjourned

ABCORI Annual Meeting Session

Nancy Bancroft, President, called this meeting to order and read Ephesians 1 :3-8. Appointments: Clerk - Rev. Leigh Johnson; Parliamentarian - Barbara Staples;

Timekeeper - Ken Chaffee

Roll call was taken - 34 churches represented

Minutes of the March 7, 2005 meeting were reviewed and received.

Treasurer's Report of 2005 and Budget Proposal for 2006 - Tom Archer, Treasurer

In 2005:

Canonicus revenue: budgeted \$630,100; received \$636,519
Canonicus expenses: budgeted. \$630, 100; spent \$589,023
ABCORI revenue: budgeted \$212,500; received \$173,638
ABCORI expenses: budgeted \$212,500; spent \$189,832
Total net income - \$31,303

Proposed budget for 2006

Presented the revenue from all different areas of ABCORI ministry - \$1,480,800 Reported a significant increase in available endowment funds due to release of previously restricted funds.

Proposed:	ABCORI income \$200,100	ABCORI expenses \$200,100
	Canonicus income \$649,500	Canonicus expenses \$649,500

Proposed amendment to the budget - Paul Becker said that the Executive Minister Search Committee needs funding. Transportation, lodging, and meals anticipated costs of \$3,000 to bring in candidates, \$500 for mailing, telephone; \$500 for miscellaneous. He proposed an increase of \$4,000.

The amendment was moved, seconded and approved.

The budget was approved as amended.

Staff introductions: Linda Martin, Annalize Gilfillan, Kathy Black, Tina Perry, Jill Patterson, Matt Black, Tom Browning, Liz Lussier, Mike Comire, Colleen Tolhurst, Don Rasmussen

Report of the Executive Minister

Rev. Dr. Donald Rasmussen said it has been a privilege to serve the past 10 years, and that he has enjoyed the opportunities to spend time in churches. He reported that we are moving ahead with the Natural Church Development program. Twenty-eight churches have now done the survey at least once. Don expressed thanks to Hank Pederson who served as interim Director of Camping and Conferencing.

In the past year changes have been made in ABCORI's investment management. Don reminded us that United Mission giving is very important. There is a beginning plan for providing a ministry of Pastor to Pastor. New Life 2010 goals moving along nicely, with thanks to Donna Sherman for chairing this committee. So far Rhode Island has 12 churches participating. Don gave thanks to our denominational leaders, and said thanks again for the opportunity to be in ministry together with our churches.

Report of Director of Administration - Liz Lussier

Liz said she has been on staff for nine weeks, and that it is great to be meeting so many enthusiastic people. She is amazed at how much work gets done by such a small staff. She said that her position is not the Camp Director but Director of Administration. Liz reported that work is being done on a new Canonicus website, and that camper memories are coming in. A new ABCORI website will also be worked on. New ways to create revenue are being explored. Liz said that a new riding lawn mower is needed for the camp and asked for contributions.

In her written report Liz listed the objectives and goals completed since Jan. I, 2006, and gave some plans for the spring of 2006.

Executive Minister Search Committee Update and Survey - Paul Becker

Paul introduced the committee: Rev. Clay Berry, Rev. Dr. Bill Crawford, Rev. Dr. Dan Cottrell, Sandy Kelly, Ann McGloshen, Don Wolfe, Donna Sherman, and Paul Becker, with Nancy Bancroft, Jeff Woods (ABCDSA), and Tony Pappas (TABCOM) serving ex officio.

Paul reported that some of Don Rasmussen's responsibilities are now being done by Liz Lussier, and that a new position profile for the Executive Minister is being drafted

A survey was distributed to be returned to Donna Sherman.

Goals for ABCORI for 2005-2010 were outlined in the written report:

- Promote congregational wellness
- Practice evangelism and outreach
- Encourage new church development
- Improve communication

Paul asked for prayers for discernment, and requested that churches sign up for times to pray in two week blocks on a prayer schedule provided.

Report from the Minister of Mission Support - Jill Paterson

Jill presented a written report. She thanked ABCORI for the privilege of serving our RI American Baptist Churches. Her focus for this year will be broadening and deepening the relationships with and between our churches, and being a liaison between the churches and the denominational partners in mission. Jill plans to visit as many churches as possible for Sunday worship, to give presentations at missions meetings, and attend other local mission events. She would like to know of any church planning such an event. The next Mission Celebration will be on Monday, September 25, 2006, at the Coventry High School. Rev. Dr. Reid Trulson will be the main speaker.

Break: Greeting one another, refreshments and singing led by Rev. Dr. Donald Crosby

OLD BUSINESS

An update from the ABCORI- TABCOM Task Force was given by Rev. Ethel Corbin

She said there was a good turn-out at the RI listening sessions. The proposal has been revised according to suggestions made. This revised proposal will go to the March meeting of the Board of Mission.

From the written report:

The rationale is to achieve more effective, efficient, creating ministry leading to healthier, growing and more vibrant churches by increasing the collaboration between ABCORI and TABCOM Each region would remain autonomous and retain ownership and governance of its properties, endowments, etc. A Bi-Regional Staff Team, composed of the Executive and Area Ministers of each region. will be formed.

NEW BUSINESS

Report of Recruitment Committee - Peggy Johnson

Board of Mission

Class ending 2008

Donald Hansen*

Class ending 2009

Fran Pedersen (1)

James Essex (1)

Rev. Clifford Hockensmith (1)

Donald Waterman (1)

Department of Church Life

Class ending 2008

Gaby Kpawoe (1)

Class ending 2009

Ann Aldrich (2)

Donna Sherman (2)

David Maine (1)

Department of Stewardship & Administration

Class ending 2009

Gary Penfield (1)

Vi Becker (1)

Lou Tripler (1)

Paul Aubin (1)

Standing Committee on Ordained Ministry

Class ending 2007: Phyllis Schmidt*

Class ending 2009: Paul Becker (2)

Ken Chaffee (2)

Election - moved, seconded, approved

Proposed By-laws revisions - Nancy Bancroft

In Article VII Section A - change word *professional* to *exempt*;

In Article VIII Section A - replace the word 'professional' with 'exempt', and for composition of the Board of Mission after 'the chair' of the Recruitment Committee adding 'or a representative' In Article VIII Section E - Deleted a duplicate paragraph requiring one week notice for calling meeting.

In Article IX Section B- Making the immediate past president of ABCORI the chair of the Recruitment Committee, and specifying that the other members will serve for three year terms.

In Article IX Section D - Create a single Staff Relations Committee instead of an Executive Ministers' Relations Committee and other committees for other staff.

Motion was made, seconded and approved to divide the question - All proposed changes except those for Article IX Section D, and those proposed changes to Article IX Section D.

Motion was made and seconded to accept all proposed changes except those involving Article IX Section D. Motion was approved.

Discussion on proposed change to Article IX Section D.

Motion made and seconded to approve the changes to Article IX Section D. Motion made to table these changes until a new Executive Minister has been appointed. Motion to table was seconded and approved.

A motion from Baptist Heritage Center was presented by Paul Becker to offer land from Canonicus to the American Baptist Historical Society, to be negotiated by the Board of Mission subject to the approval of the delegates at the May 20 meeting. The motion was seconded. **An amendment was moved, seconded and approved** to specify the land be at Canonicus. It was suggested that the Board of Mission lease the land for a minimal fee, and that if the Historical Society Center were to leave the land would revert back to Canonicus. Hank Pederson encouraged us to give them a good reason to come here. Concern was expressed on the impact this might have on the programs at Canonicus. A question was raised as to the scope of the building.

Motion was approved.

Annual Reports need to be in to ABCORI office by March 31.

Adjournment until Saturday, May 20, 2006, at Greenville Baptist Church - 9: 18 pm

Leigh Johnson, Clerk

Annual Meeting of Baptist Home of RI

The meeting was called to order by president, Vivian Searle.

Nominating Committee report

President (08) - Vivian Searle (2)

Vice-President (08) - Rev. Harry Bronkar

Members of the Board, term ending 2009

Rev. Charles Smith (2)

Richard Webb (2)

William Johnson (1)

Approved

Benediction.

Minutes of the 180th Annual Gathering (Part B) of the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island

Saturday, May 20, 2006
Greenville Baptist Church, Greenville, RI

CHRIST IS THE CORNERSTONE
Ephesians 2:19-20

The 180th Annual Gathering of the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island was held May 20, 2006, at Greenville Baptist Church. The theme was "Christ Is the Cornerstone" and the bible reference was Ephesians 2:19-20. After music lead by Vonnie Dutton and the Rev. Nancie Mooney, President Nancy Bancroft opened the meeting. Linda Bausserman, chairperson of the planning committee, presented the schedule.

Rev Joshua McClure spoke about the passage in Ephesians. He is convinced that Christ is no longer the cornerstone of the contemporary church. "An effective bible study is not an intellectual exercise. There must be a greater goal for studying. It must have a goal to lead one to a higher relationship with the Lord."

Special music was presented by the Greenville Ensemble, singing *a capella* under the direction of Charlie Greathouse.

Rev. John Holt is leaving the helm of the RI State Council of Churches after four years to become executive director of the Red Cross of Rhode Island. He announced that the Rev. Hank Pederson will be the interim executive at the Council. Rev. Holt said he had been working with the state to adjust the new fire laws so that churches would be reflected in a different way than nightclubs. Speaking of his new position, he also said, "One thing we all agree on: we must have concern for the least of these hungry children."

Donna Sherman spoke about New Life 2010. She showed a banner constructed by Beth Berry that has the names of the 13 churches that have recently been accepted as New Life 2010 churches. A certificate was presented to Calvary Baptist Church in recognition of their reaching out in new ways.

The attendees then chose among eight different workshops: Christ Is the Cornerstone; Adult Discipleship; Update on Potential Ministries of ABCORI and TABCOM; Trends in Music for Worship; Simeon's Ministry; Partners for Your Sacred Place; Pledge Increases; and the Center for Excellence in Congregational Leadership.

One hundred fifty-nine delegates gathered in the sanctuary for a second morning session. Sue Maiocchi, president of American Baptist Women's Ministries of Rhode Island, announced that the theme for the year is "Wild about Jesus." She listed upcoming activities. Brenda Clement, chairperson of the RI Statewide Housing Action Coalition, spoke about a five day march for housing which is coming up. John Wolcott spoke of "The Giving Magazine," announcing there is a free copy available for each church.

Rev. Scott Roberts, pastor of Pawtuxet Baptist Church, spoke about "Becoming a New Life Church." "Everybody needs Jesus; everybody needs community; everybody needs to grow; and everybody needs to pursue their dream."

Members of Greenville Church prepared and served lunch in two sittings, with the alternate group watching a new film, "John Clarke—Co-founder of Rhode Island." Throughout the day displays and a book table were available.

In the afternoon, Deacon Aldwin Reid, of Ebenezer Baptist Church, stirred his listeners with "A Church Portrait: Ministry to the Community." Ebenezer, the largest church in Rhode Island, is a commuter congregation in a truly ethnic melting pot neighborhood. Outreach includes food to the needy done in harmony with a need to share spiritual food. For this reason the church has declined to be part of any food bank programs which prohibit proselytizing. Ebenezer is a tithing church. God has blessed the church. "It is an organism, not an organization."

ABCORI recognized Kathleen Bianchi, who was Financial Manager, for her twenty years of service.

Rev Nancie Mooney presented the theme hymn, "Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation." This hymn will be repeated again later in the day.

The meeting adjourned while the annual meeting of the RI Baptist Educational Society was lead by Rev. Marie Carpenter. She pointed out that this year there are 13 persons receiving money from RIBES. These funds are considered loans until the recipient has served five years. All these students go to the Center for Career Development for evaluation. Virginia Bradley continues to be Corresponding Secretary. Meeting adjourned.

Nancy Bancroft, president, presided over the ABCORI Business meeting. Rev. Donald Rasmussen, executive minister, welcomed the First Haitian Baptist Church into membership. Then he recognized the people who had served as camp pastors during the previous summer.

Rev. Hank Pederson, representative to the General Board of ABCUSA, reported on activities of the national organization. There are many major changes in governance happening. Rev. Pederson is the chair of the World Relief Committee which distributes funds from One Great Hour of Sharing.

John Wolcott was named parliamentarian for discussion about involvement with The American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts (TABCOM.) Rev. Ethel Corbin said that after four years of discussions between committees and two listening sessions in Rhode Island, a fourth version of the committee report was issued March 2006. There are some possibilities of working together in some areas. **It was voted to accept the report and continue these discussions.**

The third presenter was the Rev. Dr. Linda Spoolstra of Calvary Baptist Church, who spoke about "Functional Church Structure." She began by saying that "order and spirit" are a paradox. She said churches have a single board or multi-board system. By-laws have been suspended, and Calvary has gone to a single board, servant-leader team. Change was made to become more spiritually based. "There is more satisfaction in doing ministry than in attending meetings....Relationships are more important than structures."

Afternoon workshops featured: Mission in Action; Getting to Know the John Clarke Center; Gift-Based Leadership; Summer Camp at Canonicus; The Church as a Family; Increasing Pledges, Partners for Your Sacred Place; and the Center for Excellence in Congregational Leadership.

The closing worship followed another musical interlude. The communion service was lead by our executive minister, who will be retiring before our next annual gathering. He was assisted by seven of our seminarians. A combined choir of twenty-seven voices sang "Cornerstone," directed by Stephen Martorella.

Submitted by
Janet Breckenridge, Clerk for the day

**The American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island
Pastor's Ordination Anniversaries we celebrate in 2007**

Camille Bedard	1947	60 years
Forest L. Parsons	1947	60 years
Donald H. Crosby	1962	45 years
Harry E. Bronkar	1962	45 years
George R. Finch, Jr.	1972	35 years
Paul Hanson	1977	30 years
Paul E. Rollins	1982	25 years
Robert S. Auld	1982	25 years
Robert F. Hollis	1987	20 years
R. Claiborne Berry III	1987	20 years
Travis Norvell	1997	10 years
Darin Collins	2002	5 years

Church Anniversaries

First Baptist Church of North Kingstown	225 years
Georgiaville Baptist Church	175 years

**We offer our sincere congratulations and deep appreciation
to all these pastors and churches as they look back upon
God's providence and ahead to many more years
of service in Kingdom building ministry**

AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES OF RI
Organized 1825 - Chartered 1826

PAST CONVENTION RECORDS

YEAR	PLACE OF MEETING	PRESIDENT	SECRETARY/ EXECUTIVE	BAPT ISMS	MONEY EXPENDED	WORLD MISSION GIVING
1950	Providence, First	Mrs. H.C. Johnson	Kenneth L. Cober	686	56,099	86,965
1951	Providence, Church of the Mas	Leon F. Kenney	Kenneth L. Cober	688	49,964	86,700
1952	Wakefield, First	John A. Mitchell, Jr	Kenneth L. Cober	551	58,311	84,088
1953	Warren	Frederick E. Gardner	Chris E. Lawson	642	53,762	87,013
1954	Westerly, Central	Lewis L. Allen	Chris E. Lawson	802	49,094	107,917
1955	Prov, Cran. St-Roger Williams	Hinson V. Howlett	Chris E. Lawson	783	43,961	112,562
1956	Phillips Memorial	Mrs. Ruth Skoog	Chris E. Lawson	802	47,530	117,881
1957						
1958	Providence, Central	Frank H. Snell	Chris E. Lawson	697	51,508	136,390
1959	Providence, Central	Harold L. Brown	Chris E. Lawson	830	68,865	135,572
1960	Westerly, Central	J. Edwin Ring	Chris E. Lawson	721	73,759	142,265
1961	Providence, Central	Elihu W. Wing Jr	Chris E. Lawson	754	72,728	149,493
1962	Providence, Calvary	George H. Long	Hale F. Thornberry	638	76,694	162,054
1963	Prov, Cran. St-Roger Williams	Wesley B. Drolette	Hale F. Thornberry	633	86,576	159,920
1964	Providence, First	Miss Alberta Brown	Hale F. Thornberry	606	80,289	167,212
1965	Providence, Central	Homer L. Trickett	Hale F. Thornberry	640	114,980	168,062
1966	Cranston, Phillips Memorial	Donald A. Jones	Hale F. Thornberry	588	139,978	171,207
1967	Providence, Calvary	R. Leroy Moser	Hale F. Thornberry	436	130,479	176,065
1968	Prov, Cran. St-Roger Williams	Thomas Palazzi	Hale F. Thornberry	427	132,136	178,557
1969	Westerly, Central	Forest L. Parsons	Hale F. Thornberry	488	140,824	174,262
1970	Providence Central	Stewart R. Essex	Warren L. Adams	458	136,149	175,353
1971	Cranston, Phillips, Memorial	George H. Moseley	W. Eugene Motter	391	138,834	171,231
1972	Warren	Lois Hopkins Deware	W. Eugene Motter	430	143,797	171,360
1973	Providence, Ebenezer	Roscoe C. Robinson	W. Eugene Motter	456	159,908	182,314
1974	Greenville	William R. Guise	W. Eugene Motter	454	163,931	180,160
1975	Providence, Central & First	Wilma S. Waterman	W. Eugene Motter	346	178,027	182,670
1976	Springfield, Massachusetts	L. Edgar Stone Jr.	W. Eugene Motter	486	182,171	182,963
1977	Providence, Calvary	Earl M. Pearson	W. Eugene Motter	336	181,491	190,411
1978	Cranston, Phillips Memorial	Blanche L. Jones	W. Eugene Motter	401	181,158	224,944
1979	Pawtucket, First	W. Gordon Carter	W. Eugene Motter	400	189,191	286,937
1980	Westerly, Central	Joshua A. McClure	W. Eugene Motter	446	197,528	285,268
1981	Greenville	Ethel J. Stickney	W. Eugene Motter	430	256,211	293,397
1982	Warwick, Central	P. Bishop Covell	W. Eugene Motter	339	289,285	304,472
1983	Providence, Central	Vito DePalma	Orlando L. Tibbetts	367	320,855	340,976
1984	Foster, North Foster	Dorie Zuber Daneker	Donald H. Crosby	294	418,743	398,026
1985	Cranston, Phillips Memorial	Donald R. Rasmussen	Donald H. Crosby	329	621,249	456,533
1986	Scottish Rite Cathedral	David Ryone	Donald H. Crosby	245	650,131	439,758
1987	Westerly, Central	Joyce Duerr	Donald H. Crosby	223	772,148	459,793
1988	Providence, Central	Thomas Moye	Donald H. Crosby	221	687,394	457,308
1989	Newport, Community/United	P.Gerald Small	Donald H. Crosby	255	768,346	445,766
1990	Providence, Calvary	Margaret Johnson	Donald H. Crosby	247	826,019	479,881
1991	East Greenwich, First	Harry Bronkar	Donald H. Crosby	380	920,613	478,634
1992	Pawtucket, First	Raymond Clement	Donald H. Crosby	290	971,467	477,744
1993	Westerly, Central	Raymond Clement	Donald H. Crosby	295	1,079,741	486,057
1994	Warren	Barbara J. Staples	Donald H. Crosby	320	1,080,491	556,736
1995	Harrisville, Berean	Barbara J. Staples	Donald H. Crosby	213	1,164,083	533,148
1996	Providence, Ebenezer	Robert L. Carter, Jr.	Donald H. Crosby	272	1,220,076	493,449
1997	Cranston, Phillips Memorial	Robert L. Carter, Jr.	Donald R. Rasmussen	297	1,189,823	469,633
1998	Exeter, Canonicus Camp/Conf Ctr	Thomas A. Kennedy	Donald R. Rasmussen	195	1,121,077	473,522
1999	Lincoln High School	Thomas A. Kennedy	Donald R. Rasmussen	176	1,050,230	490,146
2000	East Greenwich High School	Gail W. Fraser	Donald R. Rasmussen	151	1,119,010	436,454
2001	Providence, First in America	Gail W. Fraser	Donald R. Rasmussen	135	1,074,634	480,130
2002	Cranston, Phillips Memorial	Ethel Corbin	Donald R. Rasmussen	137	1,144,233	482,327
2003	Canonicus/Prov, Ebenezer	Ethel Corbin	Donald R. Rasmussen	190		416,729
2004	East Greenwich, First/N Scituate	Paul Becker	Donald R. Rasmussen			
2005	Canonicus/ Providence, Calvary	Paul Becker	Donald R. Rasmussen			
2006	Cranston, Phillips Mem'l/ Greenville	Nancy Bancroft	Donald R. Rasmussen			

DOCUMENTS

COVENANT OF RELATIONSHIPS

Preamble

The American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island offers this Covenant of Relationships in the hope of enriching the individual congregations of this State and the organization through which we endeavor to work.

As Baptists, we strongly affirm the worth and integrity of the local congregation of believers as a true church and a community of faith. Yet, we recognize that as churches working together in mission, we have responsibilities to one another which we fulfill through associating freely in larger societies, which are themselves, expressions of the church. This Covenant of Relationships outlines basic areas in which we carry out our responsibilities to one another through the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island, and in which that body carries out its responsibilities toward the individual congregations. This relationship has not been well defined in the past. Our constitution speaks only of “associating” churches, and defines such a church as:

“an American Baptist church which has covenanted to become a constituent member of the corporation and which has been accepted for such membership by the Annual Meeting of the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island or its Board of Mission.”

(III, A, 2)

This Covenant is not to be seen as a strict set of rules to determine every possible aspect of a relationship. Rather, it is a Covenant about a relationship, within which the partners have room to grow and contribute their own unique strengths and gifts. It is in that spirit that this Covenant of Relationships is offered, and it is hoped that in that spirit it will be accepted, so that our congregations may grow in our common mission as followers of Jesus Christ.

I

The American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island covenants to:

- A. Manifest a pastoral concern for each congregation through periodic visits by officers and staff
- B. Concern itself with the welfare and well being of all the churches of the corporation
- C. Provide placement counseling for pastors and other church staff and aid congregations seeking to fill ministerial and other staff vacancies
- D. Provide a nurturing fellowship among the agreeing churches and pastors
- E. Provide information about pastoral development and programs of continuing education
- F. Produce and distribute annual reports concerning the work of participating congregations and related organizations
- G. Provide meetings for inspiration, conducting business, resourcing, sharing concerns, and receiving information
- H. Provide resources and training for ministry
- I. Provide information on a regular basis concerning the ministries of the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island
- J. Respect the freedom of the local church to order its inner life and determine its own relationships
- K. Represent and appoint representatives from ABCORI to state ecumenical associations
- L. Provide a nurturing atmosphere for and maintain contact with members of individual congregations who are preparing for the ministry.

II

The individual congregations covenant to:

- A. Accept the stated purpose of ABCORI as recorded in Article II of the Constitution and Bylaws
- B. Support the “United Mission Basics” of American Baptist Churches/USA by contributing responsibly
- C. Welcome opportunity for fellowship and consultation with the staff and officers of ABCORI
- D. Take an active part in the work of ABCORI through delegate representation
- E. Be a strengthening fellowship by encouraging and supporting neighboring churches
- F. Participate in applicable programs and use resources supplied by ABCORI
- G. Provide for continuing education for professional church leadership
- H. Give consideration to the use of ABC/USA educational and missionary materials
- I. Work in a cooperative spirit with the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island to nurture those members preparing for the ministry.

III

The individual congregations covenant together in mutual ministry to:

- A. Be in fellowship by encouraging and supporting sister churches
- B. Communicate with each other in times of joy and grief
- C. Work cooperatively for strength of witness in ministry and mission
- D. Be in prayer for one another.

Adopted by delegates at Annual Meeting, April 25, 1993

American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island

**COVENANTING CHURCHES
as of May 20, 2007**

Warwick Central Baptist Church	May 26, 1993
Lakewood Baptist Church, Warwick	Fall 1993
Lime Rock Baptist Church, Lincoln	September 29, 1993
First Baptist Church in America, Providence	October 17, 1993
Bethany Baptist Church, Pawtucket	October 26, 1993
Phillips Memorial Church, Cranston	October 26, 1993
Carolina Free Baptist Church	November 4, 1993
Cross Mills Baptist Church, Charlestown	November 7, 1993
Niantic Baptist Church, Bradford	December 5, 1993
Shawomet Baptist Church, Warwick	December 20, 1993
The Baptist Church in Warren	January 6, 1994
First Baptist Church, Hope Valley	January 16, 1994
Tabernacle Baptist Church, Fiskeville	January 20, 1994
Central Baptist Church, Westerly	January 23, 1994
Norwood Baptist Church, Warwick	January 23, 1994
Harbor Baptist Church, Block Island	January 27, 1994
North Scituate Baptist Church	January 30, 1994
Roger Williams Baptist Church, Providence	February 2, 1994
West Exeter Baptist Church	March 13, 1994
People's Baptist Church, Cranston	April 17, 1994
Meshanticut Park Church, Cranston	May 19, 1994
First Baptist Church in Allenton, North Kingstown	September 15, 1994
Calvary Baptist Church, Providence	January 15, 1995
Central Baptist Church, Jamestown	October 24, 1997
Central Baptist Church, Providence	January 29, 1998
Pawtuxet Baptist Church, Cranston	January 31, 1998
Georgiaville Baptist Church	January 31, 1999
Chestnut Hill Baptist Church	May 30, 2001
First Baptist Church, East Greenwich	March 23, 2003
Phenix Baptist Church, West Warwick	May 19, 2003
North Foster, Foster	June 30, 2006

“Strengthening Congregations as Together We Serve Jesus Christ”.

The trust funds of the Corporation are administered by the Department of Stewardship and Administration through its Investment Committee. The portfolio is managed by Bernstein Investment Research and Management. These funds constitute the most satisfactory depository for money the donor wishes used for Christian ministry in Rhode Island. The principal or interest becomes a dependable supplement to the annual support from our churches.

WILLS AND CODICILS

You may continue your ministry into the future by remembering the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island in your will. We suggest the following form of bequest:

“I give, devise and bequeath to the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island and its successor (the sum of _____ dollars, or (describe personal property or real estate given, and here describe the property) to be used for the religious work of said Region as the Board of Mission thereof may direct.”

To the above form may be added any desired directions of applying the gifts to any particular branch of work such as church development, mission, or to any ongoing ministry.

The American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island is incorporated under the laws of the state of Rhode Island and is a permanent institution, organized to promote and extend the interests of the American Baptist Churches, USA, within the Region.

The American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island is a federally tax-exempt organization under the IRS Tax Code Section 501 (c) (3). Donors may deduct contributions to our ministry as provided in Section 170 of the IRS Code. Bequests, legacies, devices, transfers, or gifts are deductible for federal estate and gift tax purposes under Sections 2055, 2106, and 2522 of the Code, but donors are advised to consult their financial advisor or lawyer for details regarding tax implications.

Anyone interested in promoting Baptist ministry in Rhode Island may rest secure in the assurance that any money entrusted to this Region will be wisely, economically, and faithfully administered and so applied as to carry out the wishes of the giver and accomplish the greatest possible good.

For further information, phone 1-800-294-6318 or write:

Executive Minister
The American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island
PO Box 330
Exeter RI 02822-0503

COVENANT AND CODE OF ETHICS FOR PROFESSIONAL CHURCH LEADERS OF THE AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES IN THE U.S.A.

Having accepted God's call to leadership in Christ's Church, I covenant with God to serve Christ and the Church with God's help, to deepen my obedience to the Two Great Commandments; to love the Lord our God with all my heart, soul, mind and strength; and to love my neighbor as myself.

In affirmation of this commitment, I will abide by The Code of Ethics of The Ministers Council of The American Baptist Churches and I will faithfully support its purposes and ideals. As further affirmation of my commitment, I covenant with my colleagues in ministry that we hold one another accountable for fulfillment of all the public actions set forth in our Code of Ethics.

MY CODE OF ETHICS

- † **I WILL** hold in trust the traditions and practices of our American Baptist Churches; I will not accept a position in the American Baptist family unless I am in accord with those traditions and practices; nor will I use my influence to alienate my congregation/constituents or any part thereof from its relationship and support of the denomination. If my convictions change, I will resign my position.
- † **I WILL** respect and recognize the variety of calls to ministry among my American Baptist colleagues, and other Christians.
- † **I WILL** seek to support all colleagues in ministry by building constructive relationships wherever I serve, both with the staff where I work and with colleagues in neighboring churches.
- † **I WILL** advocate adequate compensation for my profession. I will help lay persons and colleagues to understand that professional church leaders should not expect or require fees for pastoral service from constituents they serve, when these constituents are helping pay their salaries.
- † **I WILL** not seek personal favors or discounts on the basis of my professional status.
- † **I WILL** maintain a disciplined ministry in such ways as keeping hours of prayer and devotion, endeavoring to maintain wholesome family relationships, sexual integrity, financial responsibility, regularly engaging in educational and recreational activities for professional and personal development. I will seek to maintain good health habits.
- † **I WILL** recognize my primary obligation to the church or employing group to which I have been called, and will accept added responsibilities only if they do not interfere with the overall effectiveness of my ministry.
- † **I WILL** personally and publicly support my colleagues who experience discrimination on the basis of gender, race, age, marital status, national origin, physical impairment or disability.
- † **I WILL**, upon my resignation or retirement, sever my professional church leadership relations with my former constituents, and will not make professional contacts in the field of another professional church leader without his/her request and/or consent.

- † **I WILL** hold in confidence any privileged communication received by me during the conduct of my ministry. I will not disclose confidential communications in private or public except when in my practice of ministry I am convinced that the sanctity of confidentiality is outweighed by my well-founded belief that the parishioner/client will cause imminent, life-threatening or substantial harm to self or others, or unless the privilege is waived by those giving the information.
- † **I WILL** not proselytize from other Christian churches.
- † **I WILL** show my personal love for God as revealed in Jesus Christ in my life and ministry, as I strive together with my colleagues to preserve the dignity, maintain the discipline and promote the integrity of the vocation to which we have been called.

(Revised 5/91)

American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

Preamble

We, the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island,

- Committed to the faith that all persons are dependent upon God, the Giver and Sustainer and Redeemer of life, and that we may most please God by accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and conforming our lives to His Spirit and way; and
- Believing that though each congregation of believers is a true church, a community of faith, our larger life as American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island is also a form of expression of the church. It partakes of churchly character and performs churchly functions, and is thus an agency for the mediating of divine grace, for the enabling of the Holy Spirit to work, and for preaching of the Gospel among all people; and
- Having freely associated ourselves, as local congregations, together for the more perfect obeying of Christ's command and the carrying out of His mission in the world, we do adopt this Constitution as descriptive of the way in which we order our common life as the American Baptist Churches in Rhode Island.

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of the Organization shall be the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island (hereafter may be identified as ABCORI). It is an organization recognized under section 501 (c) (3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code of 1954 as exempt from taxes being a non-profit religious organization.

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

The American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island is an expression of the universal Church of Christ. As a creation of local congregations of Christian believers, it becomes an extension of their life, their work and their witness in and to the world. The American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island shall establish, maintain and assist American Baptist churches in the state. It shall relate its local congregations to each other, the American Baptist Churches in the USA (hereafter may be identified as ABC/USA) and to other Baptist bodies such as the Baptist World Alliance. It also shall promote the cooperation of Baptists in Rhode Island with other Christian believers, looking toward a greater unity in Christ's Body, the Church.

ARTICLE III - POLITY

Ultimate authority for the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island shall reside with the voting delegates assembled at the Annual or any Special Meeting.

ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP

SECTION A. CONSTITUENT MEMBERS

1. The associating churches of ABCORI shall be deemed constituent members of the corporation with representation at the Annual Meeting as set forth in Section B of Article IV.
2. An associating church shall be an American Baptist Church which has covenanted to become a constituent member of the corporation and which has been accepted for such membership by the Annual Meeting of the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island or its Board of Mission. The American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island, A Covenant of Relationships sets forth the mutual responsibilities between ABCORI and its covenanting churches.

SECTION B. CHURCH DELEGATES

Each associating member church shall be entitled to representation at the Annual or Special Meetings of the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island by its pastor(s) and two (2) delegates for the first fifty (50) resident members (as reported annually to the office of the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island), plus one delegate for each additional fifty (50), or the major portion thereof. Each pastor and delegate shall be entitled to one vote. Delegates shall be appointed by the member church.

ARTICLE V - ANNUAL AND SPECIAL MEETINGS

SECTION A. ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island shall include but not be limited to: establishing ministry priorities; acting on the report of the Recruitment Committee; receiving and acting on a report of the financial status; and any other appropriate business to come before the delegates to the Annual Meeting of the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island.

1. The Annual Meeting of the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island shall be held between March 1 and May 31 of each year at such date as shall be determined by the Board of Mission. The date of the Annual Meeting shall be determined by the Board of Mission two years in advance.
2. Delegates representing one-third (1/3) of associating churches shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Less than this number may adjourn a meeting and a notice of such adjournment shall be sent in the same manner as notice of meetings.
3. The Annual Meeting may be suspended by the Board of Mission in case of emergency. The Board of Mission shall have authority to transact all business until such time as it is possible to call an Annual Meeting.

SECTION B. SPECIAL MEETINGS

1. A special meeting of the delegates to the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island shall be called by the President whenever requested by the Board of Mission or by the written request of ten (10) churches. The call shall state the time, place and purpose of the meeting.
2. A quorum shall be specified as under A 2 above.

SECTION C. NOTICE OF MEETINGS

Notice of all meetings of the delegates to ABCORI shall be sent by the secretary to each constituent church at least two weeks prior to the day of the meetings.

ARTICLE VI - OFFICERS, THEIR ELECTION AND DUTIES

SECTION A. ENUMERATION

The officers of the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island shall be a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer.

SECTION B. ELECTION AND TERM OF OFFICE

1. Other than the secretary, the officers shall be elected at the Annual Meeting of the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island, take office at the end of [and shall serve from] the adjournment of the meeting at which they are installed and shall serve for two years or until their successors are installed [elected].
2. A vacancy in any office shall be filled by election by the Board of Mission for the unexpired term of such office upon recommendation of the Recruitment Committee.
3. No person shall be eligible for re-election to the same office until three years have elapsed.

SECTION C. PRESIDENT

The President shall preside at all meetings of the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island and of the Board of Mission and shall be a member *ex-officio* of all Departments and all Committees, except that the President shall not serve on the Recruitment Committee. The President shall have the custody of the Treasurer's bond. The President shall perform such other duties as are set forth elsewhere in these By-laws.

SECTION D. VICE PRESIDENT

In the absence or disability of the President, the Vice President shall perform the duties of the President. The Vice President shall be an *ex-officio* member of the Department of Stewardship and Administration and the Department of Church Life.

SECTION E. SECRETARY

The Secretary, who shall be the Executive Minister, shall be responsible for recording and preserving minutes of meetings of ABCORI and the Board of Mission.

SECTION F. TREASURER

1. The Treasurer shall have responsibility for all monies, books and accounts, securities, contracts and financial papers of the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island. Policies regarding finances and the reporting of finances shall be established and made public. The Treasurer, when authorized by the Board of Mission, shall execute on behalf of the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island all deeds, mortgages, transfers and discharges of mortgages and assign all securities for transfer or sale.
2. The Treasurer shall be bonded for the faithful discharge of duties in such sum and with such sureties as the Board of Mission may require and approve.

SECTION G. ASSISTANT TREASURER

The Assistant Treasurer shall assist the Treasurer in the performance of duties and shall perform such other duties as shall be assigned by the Board of Mission. In the absence or disability of the Treasurer, the Assistant Treasurer shall perform the duties of the Treasurer.

ARTICLE VII - STAFF

SECTION A. EXEMPT STAFF

The exempt staff shall be the Executive Minister and other exempt staff as from time to time shall be deemed necessary for the accomplishment of its mission.

1. EMPLOYMENT

- (a) A Search Task Force for exempt staff positions shall consist of: a member of the Ministers Council; one representative from each department; one representative from American Baptist Women's Ministries of Rhode Island; one representative from American Baptist Men of Rhode Island; and four at-large members.
- (b) Ex-officio members (without vote) of the Executive Minister's Search Task Force will be a representative of the General Secretary of ABC/USA and the President of ABCORI.
- (c) All exempt staff shall be offered employment and employment terms by the Board of Mission upon recommendation of the Search Task Force at a regular meeting of the Board or at a special meeting called for that purpose. The recommendation of the Executive Minister shall be weighed carefully before any offer is made.

2. TERMINATION

All issues related to resignation, retirement, termination and disability will follow written Personnel Policies.

SECTION B. SUPPORT STAFF MEMBERS

The Executive Minister shall be responsible for the employment and termination of service of all support (non-exempt) staff members following written Personnel Policies.

ARTICLE VIII - BOARD OF MISSION

The Board of Mission shall be the governing board of the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island.

SECTION A. COMPOSITION

The Board of Mission shall consist of: The Officers and (non-voting) exempt staff of the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island; and ABC/USA General Board Representative(s). One representative from each department, the immediate past President of ABCORI; the Chair or a representative of the Recruitment Committee; the Chair or a representative of the Standing Committee on Ordained Ministry; one representative of each affiliated organization: American Baptist Women's Ministries of Rhode Island; American Baptist Men of Rhode Island; Baptist Heritage Center; Rhode Island Baptist Education Society; Baptist Home of Rhode Island; Ministers Council of Rhode Island; Canonicus Staff Alumni Association; twelve (12) at-large members.

SECTION B. TENURE

Tenure for members of the Board of Mission shall be as follows:

1. Officers representing affiliated organizations and department representatives shall be members for as long as they hold office.
2. At-large members shall be elected for a three-year term and in such manner that 1/3 (one-third) of the terms shall expire annually. At-large members shall be eligible for one additional three-year term. No one shall serve in any one position more than six consecutive years.
3. Vacancies shall be filled by the Board of Mission after receiving nominations from the Recruitment Committee.

SECTION C. POWERS OF THE BOARD OF MISSION

The Board of Mission shall have the power to:

Establish policy for ABCORI; Implement and evaluate the ABCORI priorities and objectives; Adopt the ABCORI budget; Confirm all Presidential appointments; Evaluate the Executive Minister; Establish any Task Force or Committee necessary for the functioning of the Board of Mission; Exercise all powers of the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island between Annual Meetings.

SECTION D. MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF MISSION

1. There shall be at least two (2) meetings held during the year as scheduled by the Board.
2. Special meetings may be called by the President or by the Secretary upon written request of ten (10) members of the Board of Mission.
3. Each member of the Board of Mission shall be notified at least two weeks prior to the day of the meeting.
4. Quorum shall consist of 50% plus one of the voting members of the Board of Mission.

SECTION E. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD OF MISSION

1. There shall be an executive committee of the Board of Mission which shall have the power and authority to act for and on behalf of the Board of Mission between meetings of the same. The actions of such an Executive Committee shall be subject to ratification by the Board of Mission. The Executive Committee shall meet on the call of the President or the Executive Minister, or when requested by two or more members thereof.
2. The Executive Committee of the Board of Mission shall be composed of the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Asst. Treasurer, Executive Minister and the Chairs of the Departments of Stewardship and Administration and the Department of Church Life.
3. At any meeting of the Executive Committee a majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.
4. One week's notice shall be deemed necessary and sufficient for calling a meeting of the Executive Committee unless by reason of emergency, a shorter period is required. Such meetings shall be open to the entire board and the board shall be notified of such meetings. The call of the meeting shall include a specific agenda. Any attending board member may defer an action by the committee and defer such question to the Board of Mission.
5. Minutes of meetings shall be sent to the entire board within two weeks of the meeting.

ARTICLE IX - COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD OF MISSION

There shall be committees and task forces formed to carry out the work of the Board of Mission. Members of these committees and task forces shall either be appointed by the President with approval of the Board of Mission or hold membership by virtue of their position. The President shall designate the Chairperson of each committee.

SECTION A. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

1. The Personnel Committee shall consist of five (5) persons to be divided into three classes, (2, 1 and 2), for a term of three years. Members shall be eligible for one additional three-year term and be eligible for a new appointment after the lapse of one year.
2. This Committee shall develop and publish personnel policies and provide for regular evaluation of all staff.

3. This Committee shall serve as a forum for grievances or concerns which any professional or support staff feels is not being addressed by the organization and/or its staff.
4. This Committee shall receive from the Executive Minister recommendations regarding salaries, wages and benefits for each staff. The Committee will review the proposal and make recommendations to the Department of Stewardship and Administration.

SECTION B. RECRUITMENT COMMITTEE

1. The Recruitment Committee shall be composed of the immediate past president of ABCORI who will serve as Chairperson; the Presidents of the American Baptist Men, the American Baptist Women’s Ministries, the Ministers Council; and two members-at-large, who shall serve for three (3) year terms.
2. The Committee shall serve as the Nominating Committee for officers of the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island, its Board of Mission, its Departments and all delegates to other recognized groups (such as the RI State Council of Churches). All nominations shall be confirmed by vote of the Annual Meeting or the Board of Mission. The affiliated organizations shall be requested to present nominations for their elective officers to the secretary (Executive Minister) at least one (1) month prior to the Annual Meeting.
3. This Committee, in presenting nominations, shall give consideration to adequate representation for all areas of the corporation.

SECTION C. ANNUAL MEETING COMMITTEE

This Committee shall be responsible for planning the next Annual Meeting. The Committee shall be composed of as many members as needed, who shall serve for the ensuing year; they may be re-appointed.

SECTION D. EXECUTIVE MINISTER’S RELATIONS COMMITTEE

This Committee of five (5) persons shall be appointed by the President. This committee shall foster constructive communication between the ABCORI constituency and the Executive Minister and shall encourage the professional and personal well-being of the Executive Minister.

SECTION E. PROFESSIONAL STAFF RELATIONS COMMITTEE(S)

Other professional staff may also have the President appoint a Relations Committee to serve in the same manner described in Article IX, Section D.

SECTION F. STANDING COMMITTEE ON ORDAINED MINISTRY

1. The [As a] Standing Committee [of the Board of Mission, the committee] on Ordained Ministry shall be responsible for all aspects of ordering Pastoral Ministry within the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island. It shall establish and publish policies and procedures pertaining to all issues of Ordained Ministry.

2. Composition

Three lay persons and three pastors shall be appointed for a three year term, each in such a manner that the term of one layperson and one pastor will expire annually. The officers of the American Baptist Ministers Council of RI shall serve on the committee by reason of their office. A representative of RIBES shall also serve on the committee. The executive Minister shall be ex officio with vote. Appointed members shall be eligible for one additional three year term and be eligible for a new appointment after the lapse of one year.

3. The chairperson shall be appointed annually by the president from among the ordained members of the committee.

SECTION G. TASK FORCES OF THE BOARD OF MISSION

- (a) Task forces may be formed by the Board of Mission for programmatic or task work of the board upon the presentation of a proposal and/or budget request. Membership of a task force shall be recruited from constituent member churches and a Chairperson designated.
- (b) A task force may function for up to three years and shall be evaluated periodically.
- (c) Funding for all task forces will be through the approved budget process.

ARTICLE X - DEPARTMENTS

The work of ABCORI shall be accomplished through two (2) Departments: The Department of Stewardship and Administration; The Department of Church Life.

SECTION A. DEPARTMENT OF STEWARDSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION

The Department of Stewardship and Administration shall have responsibility for administering the stewardship, financial and business affairs of the corporation.

The Department shall be responsible for the following: preparing an annual budget for the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island; overseeing all investments; promoting American Baptist Mission among the churches; having responsibility for all fund-raising within ABCORI; administering all designated funds; being custodian of all properties of the corporation.

SECTION B. THE DEPARTMENT OF CHURCH LIFE

The Department of Church Life shall concern itself with the welfare and well being of all the churches of the corporation and all aspects of corporate church life and ministry. Areas of concern to be addressed may include the following: Evangelism, Christian Education, Mission Education, Camping, Conferencing, Ecumenicity, Social Issues.

SECTION C. MEMBERSHIP AND TERM OF OFFICE

1. There shall be at least twelve (12) at-large members of each Department. They shall be elected on nomination at the Annual Meeting for a three (3) year term and eligible for one (1) additional three (3) year term. The Department of Church Life shall also have one representative from each affiliated organization [and the Standing Committee on Ordained Ministry].
2. The President shall appoint, annually, from within each Department the Chairperson and the vice-Chairperson and they may serve for two (2) one (1) year terms.

SECTION D. MEETINGS

The Departments shall meet at least three (3) times a year at the call of the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson.

SECTION E. COMMITTEES AND TASK FORCES

Each Department may establish such committees and/or task forces as deemed necessary to fulfill their purpose. The Chairperson and the membership of a committee or task force shall be confirmed by the appropriate department.

1. DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEES -- A committee may be formed by a department for the internal work of the department. Members for a committee may come from the department or any constituent church. All committees shall be chaired by a member of the department.
2. DEPARTMENTAL TASK FORCES
 - (a) Task forces may be formed by a department for programmatic or task work of the department upon the presentation of a proposal and/or budget request. Membership of a task force shall be recruited from constituent member churches and a Chairperson designated.
 - (b) A task force may function for up to three years and shall be evaluated periodically.
 - (c) Funding for all task forces will be through the approved budget process.

ARTICLE XI – AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS

Section A. DEFINITION.

Affiliated Organizations are those whose constitution and by-laws have been approved by the delegates of ABCORI.

Section B. RELATIONSHIP TO ABCORI.

1. Affiliated organizations will designate a representative to attend meetings of the Board of Mission, and to report back to their respective boards. They shall also regularly report on their own organization's activities to the entire ABCORI constituency.
2. Affiliated organizations will submit an annual report, including financial statement(s) and a list of officers and board members for publication in the ABCORI Directory and Yearbook.

3. In all matters not specified in this Constitution, affiliated organizations are autonomous, nor does ABCORI have any administrative, fiscal, legal or other responsibility for any affiliated organization.

Section C. ENUMERATION.

The following are recognized as affiliated organizations:

- American Baptist Men (ABM)
- American Baptist Women's Ministries of RI (ABWMRI)
- Baptist Heritage Center (BHC)
- Baptist Home of RI (BHRI)
- Canonicus Alumni Association
- Ministers Council
- RI Baptist Education Society (RIBES)

ARTICLE XII - AMENDMENTS

This Constitution and By-laws may be amended or revised by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the delegates present and voting at an Annual Meeting or a special meeting of the delegates. Written notice of all amendments and/or revisions shall be mailed to all constituent churches and delegates at least two weeks prior to the date of the meeting.

ARTICLE XIII - INDEMNITY

The Power of indemnification under the laws of Rhode Island shall not be denied or limited by the By-laws.

ARTICLE XIV - PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in *Robert's Rules of Order, The Modern Edition* shall govern the American Baptist Churches of Rhode Island in all cases in which they are not inconsistent with the Constitution and By-laws and special rules of the corporation.

Note: To assist in implementing the By-laws, a set of "Policies and Procedures" has been approved by the Board of Mission. Copies of these are available from the ABCORI office.

Amended by delegates March 6, 2006

NOTE:

Proposed additions are underlined.

Proposed deletions are in [brackets.]

These changes are proposed for vote at the May 19, 2007 annual meeting.